THE

Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India

The CHEETAL

OCTOBER, 1959

VOL. 2 No. 1

Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India.

I. The aims and objects of the Society are as follows :

(a) To promote interest in the preservation and conservation of all forms of animal life among the youth of the country.

(b) To assist in enforcing the game and arms rules and to bring to the notice of the authorities any infringement of the same.

(c) To advise and help Government and the District authorities in the formation, maintenance and protection of Sanctuaries and National Parks.

(d) To raise funds for the carrying out of the above aims and objects.

(e) To carry on any other activities which will serve the above objectives, including publicity and propaganda and the issue of a journal.

(f) To assist members of the Society in obtaining shooting and fishing facilities and facilities for viewing and photographing wild life etc.

II. The Society has, upto-date:—

Patrons	...	17	Ordinary Members	...	95
Life Members	...	14	Educational Members	...	5
Institutional Members	...	15	Professional Members	...	17
Affiliated Members	...	2	Students Members	...	10
			Honorary Members	...	7

The Society's funds stand, so far, at Rs. 10,500/- nearly.

III. **Office Bearers and Members of the Executive Committee.**

President:—The Maharaja of Nabha.

Vice-Presidents:—Shri P. D. Stracey, I.F.S., Executive Vice-President.
Shri R. L. Holdsworth.
The Maharaja of Kotah.
The Maharaja of Panna.

Honorary Secretary:—Shri Gurkirat Singh Mann.

Asstt. Honorary Secretaries:—Shri Ram Prakash, P.F.S.
Shri Arjun Singh, P.F.S. (Retd.)

Honorary Treasurer:—Shri M. L. Khanna, P.F.S. (Retd.)

Members:—Shri S. P. Sahi.
Brig. Gambhir Singh,
Commandant, Military College.
Shri Tej Bahadur Singh.
Shri B. Mitchell.
Capt. E. G. Melvill.
Sardar Ranbir Singh.
Colonel Powell.
Shri Narendra Singh.
Major Mainwaring.
Wild Life Club, F.R.I. & C.
Dr. John C. Taylor, Sr.
Dr. Baini Prasad.
Brig. Ranbir Bakshi, M.C.
Shri S. S. Negi, P.F.S.(Retd.)
Shri T. S. Negi, I. P. (Retd.)

Ex-Officio Members

The Chief Game Warden, Uttar Pradesh.
The Conservator of Wild Life, Punjab.
The Deputy Game Warden, Himachal Pradesh.
The Divisional Forest Officer, Saharanpur.
The District Magistrate, Dehra Dun.
The Superintendent of Police, Dehra Dun.

The Divisional Forest Officer, Dehra Dun.

Sub-Committees

(i) Wild Life Legislation.
(ii) Publicity.
(iii) Education and Propaganda.
(iv) Fishing.

Postal Address

7, Astley Hall,
Dehra Dun.

Telegraphic Address

"CHEETAL"
Dehra Dun.

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The Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India, Dehra Dun—First Annual General Meeting, 19th April, 1959.

Chairs :—Major M. A. R. Skinner, Sh. Hamid A. Ali, I.C.S. (Retd.), S. Gurkirat Singh Mann, Sh. P. D. Stracey, I.F.S. (Vice-President), H. H. The Maharaja of Nabha (President), Sh. J. N. Onial (Hon. Secy.), Sh. Manchanda, S. Ranbir Singh, Sh. B. Mitchell.

1st Row Standing:—Mr. Harrison Taylor (U.S.A.), Mr. O. D. Jackson, Sh. K. S. Srivastava, Sh. K. S. Mehta, Sh. K. L. Mehta, Sh. S. Gupta, Sh. A. Oswald, Sh. B. Wadhwani, Sh. Narindra Singh, Sh. T. S. Negi (I.P. Retd.), Sh. P. N. Bahri, Sh. Y. M. L. Sharma, Sh. S.A. Shah, Dr. R. S. Gupta.

Back Row:—Sh. Tej Bahadur Singh, Sh. A. L. Rao, Capt. Norton, Dr. B. Frank (U.S.A.), Dr. S. Krishna Swamy, Sh. S. P. Sahi, Sh. A. Rashid, Sh. K. K. Nair, Sh. M. A. Edwards.

First General Body Meeting, Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India.
19th April, 1959.

H. H. of Nabha, President, cutting the 1st Anniversary Cake.

Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India

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Ourselves

I. ONE YEAR OLD.

In April last, our Society was one year old and to-day it is safe to say that we have passed the teething stage. Without wishing to indulge in complacency, it can be fairly claimed that we have made a good start. For this, apart from the labours of devoted office-bearers under the encouraging baton of a President, who, apart from his personal predilections, has inherited a legacy of genuine love for wild creatures, there is the present 'climate' which, to judge from the expressions of public opinion from time to time, appears favourable for the growth and development of movements for the saving of wild life. The 'Renaissance' in Indian affairs which started after Independence has not yet lost its tempo—in fact is just getting into its stride and the concern for the vanishing wild life of our country is claiming a share of this public awakening.

But the priority which is given to wild life in Government activities is still lamentably low indeed. Very little money is being spent on the actual protection of wild life and on the enforcement of the existing rules, inspite of this being the most urgent task and an obvious one. The custodianship of wild life in the absence of large private estates and land-holdings, is the Government and in this aspect of the problem we are in their hands entirely.

The response from forest officers, who are the traditional guardians of wild life, to membership of the Society has been very poor on the whole. Subscribers to "The Cheetal", however, have been coming in from the army very encouragingly of late, as the result of the interest taken by the Army Chief of Staff and the Adjutant General. We look to the top foresters of India for a similar lead—so far the State forest departments have been 'uneven' in their response. Rajasthan has subscribed *en bloc*, whereas the response from Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and U.P. has been practically nil. Yet, distant Andhra Pradesh has enrolled some 24 Divisions ! What is this if not a reflection of the interest of the heads of forest departments?

The road ahead of us is very long and we are under no illusions as to the magnitude of the task before us, which is to awaken the public and persuade the governments of the States of India to protect wild life more efficiently than is being done at present.

It is immaterial what others think of us. It is possible that some sportsmen consider us to be a collection of 'has beens' in the matter of shikar, or persons who have slaked their

blood-lust in innumerable killings and now want to see that the legitimate shikari is restricted. The latter is far from being the case and one of our first aims is to provide the legitimate sportsman with adequate game for the chase, through sensible management and conservation of species.

II. 'NORTHERN INDIA' OR 'ALL INDIA'?

We have been urged by several persons to drop the word 'Northern' and to expand our organisation so as to cover the whole of India, but for obvious reasons we have hesitated to do so. We have no wish to usurp jurisdiction where we cannot make our voice felt, for one thing, and the formidable difficulties of a private society such as ours, depending purely upon voluntary effort and funds, in garnering information on and spreading the message of wild life in the distant corners of India, are fully realised. When we say that we have not yet been able to establish ourselves completely in northern India, we mean just that, but it should not be construed as an expression of defeatism. Along with many others, we feel that a job well and thoroughly done in a restricted area is worth more than one that is ineffectually accomplished over a vast zone. In any case, the word 'northern' should not be taken too literally. It has as much significance as the word 'Bombay' in the name of the Bombay Natural History Society and we are pledged to work for wild life in the whole of India.

Still, the demands from the north-eastern part of India, at least, for a society to represent the sportsmen and conservationists in a region which is, in many respects, the most interesting and to give expression to the voices of workers for wild life in the States of Bihar, Bengal and Assam, cannot be ignored. Accordingly, after due consideration, it was resolved at the last General Body Meeting in April, 1959 to expand the jurisdiction as laid down in our new constitution so as to embrace these three States. For all practical purposes, this region is a homogenous one and to that extent the problems facing wild life are the same. We are confidently looking forward to the formation of branches in Bihar, Bengal and Assam on the east and in Rajasthan in the west, which will focus attention on the local problems and canalise the energies of the many sportsmen and wild life enthusiasts who are to be found in these areas.

III. OUR MEMBERSHIP

At the General Body Meeting in April 1959, a revised constitution was discussed and some new memberships were introduced with a view to attracting all those who are connected with wild life, either directly or indirectly. A Professional membership, at 50% of Ordinary membership rates was introduced, under which Foresters, Agriculturists, Soil Conservationists and Wild Life Managers can qualify for membership. A Student membership at 50% of the Ordinary membership and with no entrance fee was introduced. Similarly, with a

view to attracting teachers and trainers, an Educational membership at 50% of the Ordinary membership was introduced. These very generous terms are expected to attract a number of Student and Professional and Educational members. Finally, a category of Family membership was introduced, in order to attract whole families to become members of our Society. Families of Life, Ordinary, Professional and Educational members, for a payment of twice the fees, will enjoy all the ordinary rights of membership, except that only the head of the family will receive notices and the magazine free of charge.

It was provided that Educational, Professional and Family members could commute their membership for life by paying ten years' subscription at any time, allowing for payments already made.

A further proviso was added to the effect that Ordinary members could convert their membership to Life, at any time upto 5 years, by paying the balance of the difference between Rs. 150/- and the accumulated payments, including entrance fee, up to that time.

To sum-up, these are the various categories of membership of the Society:—

1.	Life Members:	Rs. 150/-	
2.	Ordinary Members:	Rs. 20/- Entrance Fee. Rs. 12/- Annual Subscription	Conversion to Life within 5 years on paying the difference.
3.	Professional Members:	50% of Ordinary membership	Commutation for life by paying 10 times the subscription.
4.	Educational Members:		
5.	Student Members:	—do—	No Entrance Fee.
6.	Family Members: (Life, Ordinary, Professional and Educational).	Double the subscription.	
7.	Affiliated Members:	Five times Ordinary membership.	
8.	Institutional Members:	No entrance fee. Five votes. Two issues of the magazine.	

IV. RECIPROCITY.

It is not unreasonable on our part to expect reciprocity from the authorities who are in charge of wild life in the country. The Society can justifiably claim to possess among its ranks experienced and intelligent sportsmen and conservationists who, while being imbued with the desire to see wild life preserved for posterity, are public spirited enough to recognise the difficulties that beset this problem. We have made certain suggestions to State Forest Departments on shooting rules, close seasons etc., and we have offered our services in several directions. The response has been rather disappointing, even making allowance

for the traditional slowness with which authority moves. Moreover, unilateral decisions which result in curtailment of legitimate sport and, in some cases create confusion in the minds of the public, are sometimes taken by the same authorities. An example is the sudden cancellation of the Annual Small Game permit in U. P. We again reiterate that it is our desire to serve the public and to assist the Government in wild life matters and we would earnestly request that, before steps are taken to alter game rules or procedures, the Society be given an opportunity to express its opinion on them.

Editorial Notes

1. FIRST THINGS FIRST

In the matter of improving facilities in our Sanctuaries and National Parks for the viewing of game, very little imagination is being displayed. Massive look-out towers are being built in various sanctuaries but in some cases their location is highly artificial, such as by the side of a road, and no attempt is made to build them in a secluded spot or to make use of camouflage and existing trees and vegetation etc. The machans in the Hailey National Park (now Corbett National Park) are a typical example of this. Once the machans are built, no further steps are taken to improve the surroundings so as to make them attractive to game or to eliminate all disturbing factors, such as grazing, grass-cutting and timber-felling etc. There is much that can be done in this respect. Salt-licks can be created, water-catchment improved, green crops sown and coarse grasses replaced by more succulent types, while the elementary precaution of burning off the grass early, so as to provide fresh shoots of new grass during the tourist season, should be thoroughly observed. On the other hand we have heard of arrangements for search-lights on the towers, as in the Hazaribagh National Park of Bihar, presumably to light up the country to display the (non existent ?) game-animals! It would be more to the point to spend this money on restocking the area with game and making conditions so attractive that they can be seen during the day, from vehicles or from elephants, as is the case in Kaziranga, Bandipur etc.

It is high time that first things come first in our sanctuaries and national parks, with the primary aim of creating undisturbed and attractive conditions for the animals and birds to come to the places during day-light. The first requirement is *no disturbance* and to that extent *all exploitation* should be banned within a reasonable distance around look-out machans.

Secondly, on the side of the viewers, it seems to be, at least for Indian conditions, a *sine-qua-non* that the approach to the machans and the getting into them must not be observed by the animals. The other day this was demonstrated on a visit to the Corbett National Park. Herds of cheetal were grazing in the early morning near one of the machans, which was erected in a very open spot and the approach to which was completely unconcealed. When visitors attempted to approach the machan and got into it, the herds scattered in different directions and no amount of driving or persuasion could get them to come near enough for a photograph.

Another disturbing feature in Sanctuaries, particularly in the famous Gir Sanctuary of erstwhile Saurashtra and the Corbett National Park of the U.P., is the tying-up of buffalo baits for lions and tigers to kill so that photographs may be taken. In the case of the lion, photographing of the kill can sometimes be accomplished in day-light and the whole affair smacks of sadism. We have seen a film of this killing and it revolted us. The reader is spared the details but the dying kicks of the buffalo as the lion hung on to its throat will remain in our memory forever. If this is the only way for us to see the lion in the Gir, then let us not see it! Our sanctuaries and national parks must not become the setting for a 'Roman holiday' for the salacious-minded photographer to see an unfortunate animal, tied helplessly to a stake, killed by a beast of prey. It is quite another thing to tie up a bait for a tiger to kill in darkness and to sit up over the kill the next day to shoot the animal. But sadism in our sanctuaries and national parks must not be encouraged, as it is against the true culture and sentiments of our people and the country.

2. RIFLE CLUBS IN INDIA

Are Rifle Clubs in India a potential threat to our wild life? For some years wild life protectionists have been watching the development of rifle clubs and shikar clubs all over India. The reason behind these, frankly, is political, the excuse being that our young people must become martial-minded and be trained in the use of arms to defend the country, if needed. Side by side with this development, the effort to produce rifles and shot-guns for sportsmen in India is being pressed. Has a thought been given to the eventual repercussions of this movement? If even a small percentage of the many thousands of young men and young women, who are being taught to use rifles, become shikaries the country will be infested with them later. We just have not got, any longer, the wild life to meet the demand which might arise and unlike America, where tremendous efforts are put into the hunting and shooting industry to provide something to sportsmen to shoot at, nothing is being done in this country on such lines.

In Meerut there is a flourishing Rifle Club and in the neighbouring Hastinapur area, 15 miles away, in the plantations which are being created by the forest dept. on the *kholas* of

the Ganga river, there is a solitary tiger. On the plea that he is dangerous to cattle, the local Rifle Club wanted to have him shot. And in the very plantations there is a herd of wild cattle which is damaging plants ! Thanks to a fair minded and strong D. F. O. the tiger has been spared until it is definitely proved that he is damaging cattle to such an extent which necessitates his being destroyed.

The same pattern may be repeating itself in many parts of India now that we have hoards of young riflemen itching to pull their triggers at something more alive than a dummy target. The only solution, as long as the present political climate persists and the need for this training of the youth of the nation in the use of arms continues to be felt, is to attempt to canalise some of this potential destruction of our wild life into target-practices and rifle-shooting competitions. Otherwise we can see nothing but one more threat, and a severe threat at that, to our wild life in India.

3. DISCRIMINATION

In certain States differential rates of shooting fees are charged to 'foreigners' and 'Indian nationals'. In the U.P., for instance, Indian nationals pay Rs. 20/- and foreigners Rs. 50/-. While the intention is that the sportsman visiting India should pay a fair price for the privilege of shooting a tiger, which is one of the most sought-after trophies in the world, there is no reason why foreigners long resident in India and working as missionaries, doctors etc. and in business or commercial firms, should be similarly mulcted. In the U.P., the rule does not distinguish between foreigners who are *residents* of India and foreigners who merely *visit* India. It is hard on a person, who, for all intents and purposes is an Indian citizen and who pays taxes in the country, that he should be treated on the same footing as the foreigner visiting India for a few months for tourism and shooting.

The similar rule in Bombay distinguishes between *resident* and *non-resident* and here again there is scope for criticism because it seeks to distinguish between Indian Nationals of one State and another. It would be a correct appreciation of the situation to have one category of '*Indian nationals* and *residents in India*' and another category of '*others*', charging the latter higher fees for their shooting.

This suggestion is brought to the notice of the States concerned and of all States in India, for that matter, as one which will remove a source of irritation and discrimination between sportsmen *resident* in India.

4. THREAT TO THE CORBETT NATIONAL PARK

The public is unaware that the famous Corbett (previously Hailey) National Park is doomed for all intents and purposes. It is contemplated to convert the greater part of the park into a huge lake by damming the Ramganga river where it emerges from the Siwaliks into the

plains. The project, which has apparently been decided upon by the U.P. Govt., has been postponed to the 3rd Five Year Plan because of lack of funds. But when it materialises, the park would have lost the greater part of the flat areas on which thousands of cheetal graze. The only flat portion which will be above water will be the high bank of the river, on which Dhikala is located. Here, at most, a few hundred cheetal can be accommodated. The rest will be forced to scatter to other areas and as there is no other flat land within the Siwaliks and the Himalayas and as cheetal do not favour hilly country, the result will be their disappearance.

It is a commentary on the place which such topics occupy in India, that this threat to her most famous National Park should have not attracted the attention that it deserves. In America, such a case would have been the focus of strong public agitation against the virtual destruction of a notable wild life habitat. A recent news item from there has referred to the public hearings being held by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on several great dams which have been strongly objected to by sportsmen, conservation groups and wild life agencies, both State and Federal, on the score that their construction would destroy important wild life, fish and scenic resources.

In any case a situation can arise, similar to that which is now confronting the authorities in Africa where the dam on the Zambezi river is flooding an area of some 2,500 sq miles, cutting off thousands of islands formed by the high ground. An account of this, in the form of extracts from an article in the "Oryx" magazine, is given elsewhere.

Rather than risk the possibility of this in the Corbett National Park, where in any case the congestion of cheetal in the Dhikala area will result in over-grazing of the site and starvation of the animals, with the added possibility of disease breaking out, we would suggest that the authorities commence to harvest the large herds of cheetal which are now to be found on the low ground near the Boxar Rest House, which will be the first to be submerged by opening up this area to shooting, even allowing females to be shot, for the next 10 years. It is intelligent game management of this kind which will best serve our wild life. Even now in such sanctuaries as Kansrao, in the Dehra Dun division, there appears to be severe competition between the cheetal and the domestic cattle for the existing grazing, which may account for the very poor heads seen. Suggestions have been made to restrict the incidence of grazing, but in vain.

The Game Laws of Bombay State

The Bombay State Government has always been fully alive to the vital need for the conservation of its wild life resources and has accordingly pioneered, from time to time, the enactment of suitable legislation with a view to safeguarding this valuable national asset.

Consequent to the reorganisation of States in 1956, the present Bombay State is composed of the residual ex-Bombay Vidarbha, Saurashtra and Kutch States. In the incoming areas, the various game acts and rules which were in force prior to reorganisation have been continued, while in the ex-Bombay State area, the Bombay Wild Animals and Wild Birds Protection Act, 1951, has been in force since 1953.

The various game acts and rules obtaining in the component parts of the present Bombay State are briefly summarized as under.

MARATHWADA (erstwhile Hyderabad State area).

There is no special game Act for the Marathwada region comprised of Aurangabad, Bhir, Osmanabad, Parbhani and Nanded districts and some parts of Bidar district. Wild life in the reserved and protected forests is, however, protected in general under the ex-Hyderabad Forest Act which is still applicable to this area. Special game rules have also been framed to control the hunting of wild animals, both inside and outside the Government forests.

VIDARBHA (erstwhile M. P. State area).

The Vidarbha region, comprised of Nagpur, Chanda, Bhandara, Amrawati, Yeotmal, West Berar and Buldhana districts, is comparatively richer in game, both big and small. The game acts in force in this area are:—

(i) The Wild Birds and Wild Animals Protection Act, 1912.

(ii) The C.P. Game Act, 1935, and the Rules framed thereunder.

The former act of 1912 deals mainly with the declaration of complete or partial close time for the various kind of wild animals and birds to which it applies. The close time for feathered game, such as jungle and pea-fowl applies to the hens only and not to the cocks. Under the latter act of 1935 and the rules framed thereunder, no person can shoot or capture wild animals or birds without obtaining a game licence from any District Magistrate in the Vidarbha region on payment of fees as under:—

		Annual Fee	*Monthly Fee*
Big Game Licence	...	20/-	10/-
Small Game Licence	...	10/-	5/-

The holder of a Game Licence is entitled to apply for the reservation of any of the 140 and odd shooting blocks into which the whole reserved forest area has been divided. The fees for the reservation of shooting blocks are as under:—

For residents of India: Rs. 2/- per day subject to a minimum of Rs. 20/- and a maximum of Rs. 50/- for the whole month.

For non-residents of India or a party including such person } Rs. 20/- per day subject to a minimum of Rs. 200/- and a maximum of Rs. 350/- for the whole month.

A shooting block is allotted for a period not exceeding one month at a time and only one animal of each species is allowed to be shot. Shooting of tiger and sambhar is allowed only in shooting blocks reserved for one full month.

In addition to the game licence fee and the shooting block fee, royalty on each animal shot is payable at prescribed rates. Gazetted forest officers on duty are allowed to shoot in unreserved shooting blocks on payment of only royalty on the game shot.

It may be pointed out here that consequent to the abolition of zamindaris etc., vast areas of ex-proprietory forests, to the extent of several thousand square miles, particularly in the Nagpur circle, have been vested in the forest department. Pending their constitution into reserved forests, these areas are immediately required to be formed into shooting blocks so as to ensure proper control over the shooting of game therein, thus putting an end to their present fluid status from this particular point of view.

SAURASHTRA AND KUTCH

There was a wild animals and wild birds protection act for the Saurashtra region, excluding Kutch, for which the Wild Animals and Wild Birds Protection Act, 1912, still operates. Under the Saurashtra act, hunting of any wild animal except panther was prohibited, but as it was not considered necessary to protect all animals and birds throughout the former State of Saurashtra, this prohibition has been relaxed and enforced on the lines of the ex-Bombay State region.

ORIGINAL BOMBAY STATE

(i) Old rules.

Prior to 1953, the hunting of game was regulated under the provisions of the Indian Forest Act and the Rules framed thereunder, which prohibited hunting and shooting except under a circle or shooting block licence, to be obtained from the Conservator of Forests concerned, on payment of fees as under:—

For a Circle Licence—Rs. 25/- for a resident and Rs. 50/- for a non-resident. Gazetted officers on duty exempted.

For a Shooting Block Licence (for a person not holding a Circle Licence)—Rs. 20/- plus Rs. 10/- for each additional gun for residents; Rs. 25/- plus Rs. 15/- for each additional gun for non-residents.

The holder of a circle licence, if permitted to reserve a shooting block, was required to pay an additional fee of Rs. 10/- for residents and Rs. 15/- for non-residents. The period of the circle licence was one year while that of the block licence did not exceed one month. The holder of a circle licence could shoot in any forest within the circle not notified as closed for the purpose, except within a shooting block, for which a block licence had already been issued in somebody else's favour. With the exception of carnivora, bear and pig, only a limited number of animals could be shot in any shooting block during the year.

(ii) New rules.

The above provisions were not found adequate since they did not apply to the non-forest areas. Hence the Government of Bombay enacted a more elaborate and comprehensive legislation called "The Bombay Wild Animals and Wild Birds Protection Act, 1951." This new act, which has been brought into force from 1953, is an exemplary piece of legislation for the preservation and protection of wild life and its salient features are as under.

The act provides for the establishment of a separate Wild Life Preservation department under a Wild Life Preservation Officer of the grade of a Conservator of Forests, assisted by official Game Wardens (all territorial D.F.Os and Dy. collectors, in places in which D.F.Os are not available), Asst. Game Wardens (all R.F.Os, and Police Sub-Inspectors where R.F.Os are not available), and Honorary Game Wardens (appointed for each circle from among experienced sportsmen of integrity and repute). There are in all 52 Game Wardens, 363 Asst. Game Wardens, and 38 Hony. Game Wardens throughout the State. A State Wild Life Advisory Board, with various officials and non-officials as members and the Wild Life Preservation Officer as secretary, has been formed to advise the State Government in matters of policy, establishment of game sanctuaries and national parks, grant of licences and permits, etc. The act prohibits the hunting of any wild animal or bird, whether in forest or non-forest area, without the possession of a licence of the proper category, depending upon the kind of game to be hunted.

The following categories of monthly or annual licences valid throughout the State are issued :—

(1) For SMALL GAME, including small deer and antelopes, hyaena and wolf (one of each), and feathered game. Fee Rs. 20/- annual and Rs. 10/- monthly.

(Note:—For the past few years, all kinds of deer and antelopes, excluding bluebull, have been completely protected so as to give them a chance to multiply).

(2) For BIG GAME including tiger, panther, sambhar, cheetal and bear (one of each). Annual fee Rs. 60/-, monthly fee Rs. 30/-.

(Note:—For the past few years, sambhar and cheetal have been completely protected so as to give them a chance to multiply).

(3) For SPECIAL BIG GAME including lion, elephant and bison (one of each). Annual fee Rs. 300/- and Rs. 150/- monthly.

(Note:—Lion and elephant are completely protected).

(4) For the POSSESSION OF PET ANIMALS.

(5) For the TRAPPING OF ANIMALS AND BIRDS.

(6) For DEALING IN TROPHIES. (Trophy dealers are required to furnish details and particulars of their transactions to the Department).

Special provision has been made for hunting wild life for purposes of scientific research, collection of specimens for zoological gardens, museums, etc. and for destroying wild animals which constitute a serious menace to human life or property.

No licence is, however, necessary to hunt the following species classified as vermin since they are mostly destructive : mongoose, civet cat, wild cat (excluding the larger carnivora), wild dogs, rodents (excluding hare, giant squirrel and flying squirrel), jackal, monkey, bat, crow, birds of prey (excluding vulture), and parakeet.

Offences under the act cannot be compounded and all offenders have to be necessarily prosecuted. The maximum penalty prescribed on conviction is imprisonment upto six months or fine upto Rs. 500/- or both.

In addition to the usual restrictions, the act further prohibits the tying up of live baits for carnivora, the shooting of pea-fowl, the organising of beats in forest areas without the permission of the local R.F.O., and trading in venison, which has been made a punishable offence. It also provides for the establishment of game sanctuaries and national parks and acquisition of private land etc. for the purpose.

Defects and anomalies in the existing game rules and suggestions for improvements

(A) VIDARBHA

(1) The existing restriction of allowing only one animal of each species to be shot on a shooting block permit in all cases, irrespective of the abundance in which the species occur in the shooting blocks, appears to be too rigid and harsh. It is suggested that in shooting blocks which abound in smaller deer and antelopes, more than one animal of such species

may be allowed to be shot on payment of the prescribed royalty above a certain reasonable free limit of say, one animal per week, for the bonafide consumption of the occupants of the shooting block.

(2) The rate of royalty (viz. Rs. 25/-) recently fixed for bluebulls is comparatively out of all proportion and appears to be unjustifiable. This antelope, besides being a serious menace to field crops, is not much fancied as a game animal and hence a royalty of Rs. 10/- would appear to be more reasonable.

(3) The list of the available shooting blocks, indicating their exact location and extent, the mode of access, camping and other facilities available, and the kind and quantity of game allowed to be shot in each block, should be widely publicised for the information and guidance of sportsmen in general.

(4) The total number of shooting blocks in each division should be grouped into two series, opening at 15 days or one month's intervals, so that half the blocks will always be getting rest.

(5) The existing procedure for the issue of shooting block permits is required to be simplified by vesting every D.F.O. with full powers for the disposal, on the spot, of all applications for the reservation of blocks within his division, the Conservator of Forests acting merely as an appellate authority in cases of dispute or genuine grievance arising from the D.F.O's decision.

It is also desirable that all matters relating to the issue of game licences and the enforcement of the game rules should be dealt with exclusively by officers of the forest or wild life department, who alone can normally be expected to possess the necessary technical knowledge and know-how required for dealing promptly and competently with such matters. The existing practice of dual control by associating the officers of the revenue department with this work, merely leads to avoidable confusion and delay in disposal. The only other department which might be associated with the forest deparment in the enforcement of the game laws, particularly in the non-forest areas, is the police department, which may be armed with the necessary powers as done under the Bombay Wild Animals and Wild Birds Protection Act, 1951.

(B) ORIGINAL BOMBAY STATE

The Bombay Wild Animals & Wild Birds Protection Act, 1951, looks fairly elaborate and foolproof on paper, but its enforcement presents many practical difficulties and drawbacks, which are listed below :

(1) Although a few additional agencies have been created for the enforcement of its provisions, such as police officials and honorary game wardens, this responsibility still continues to devolve mainly on the staff of the forest department which is already too overburdened with its multifarious duties to do full justice to the important task of wild life preservation. It is, therefore, absolutely essential to create for this work adequate additional qualified wild life staff under the direct control of the Wild Life Preservation Officer. The following set-up is suggested :–

One Wild Life Warden of Dy. Conservator's grade for each forest circle or for 3 to 4 districts.

One Wild Life Asst. Warden of Ranger's grade for each forest division or for 2 to 3 sub-divisions or tehsils. One Wild Life Forester for each forest range or tehsil. One Wild Life Guard for each forest round or police station.

This wild life staff will function as a mobile squad provided with suitable Government conveyances, firearms and ammunition. The appointment of this additional staff will not, however, absolve the normal forest staff of their responsibilities for wild life preservation and they will continue to perform these duties in close collaboration with the special staff.

(2) The fees charged for the various types of game licences, particularly the big game licence, are not compatible with the sport offered. For example, the annual big game licence, costing Rs. 60/-, permits the shooting of one each of tiger, panther, bear, sambhar and cheetal. Of these, sambhar and cheetal have been declared as completely protected, while tiger and bear are now mostly rare and, therefore, not likely to be available. That leaves only one panther, for which no shikari of moderate means can affored to throw away the substantial amount of Rs. 60/-. This state of affairs tends to deffinitely discourage the bonafide shikari from taking out a game licence and we thus lose the services of our most valuable ally against the poacher, which is in fact what every bonafide shikari visiting our forests potentially represents. Although the new game licences now issued are applicable to the whole State, this does not represent any distinct advantage, since the average shikari rarely goes for shikar beyond his own or the adjoining districts. It might, therefore, be desirable to revive the former Circle Licence on payment of Rs. 25/- for a resident and Rs. 50/- for a non-resident, with the provision for reserving shooting blocks on additional payment, as before.

(3) The object of prohibiting the tying up of live bait for carnivora is not at all understood. A ban on this popular and convenient technique is more or less tantamount to prohibiting the shooting of carnivora altogether, since the possibilities of finding natural kills in the forest as and when required by a sportsman are exceedingly remote, and the other

methods, such as beating or shooting from elephant back, are either too costly or not adoptable for want of necessary facilities. The present irksome restriction merely compels otherwise bonafide shikaris to resort to unlawful tactics to achieve their objectives and needs to be withdrawn forthwith.

(4) The total ban on the shooting of pea-fowl, one of the commonest and best game birds available in our forests, also appears to be unreasonable. This ban has presumably been necessitated by the widespread destruction of this bird for the sake of its beautiful plumage, which is a commercial commodity in great demand in foreign markets. But this evil can be controlled in other ways instead of totally depriving the bonafide shikari of his legitimate sport. Apart from the shooting of pea-hens during the usual close time generally prescribed for birds and the shooting of pea-fowl in the close proximity of villages, no other restrictions on the shooting of this fine game bird by bonafide sportsmen appear necessary.

(5) It is not at all practicable for licence-holding sportsmen to obtain the prior permission of the local R.F.O. before organising beats in forest areas, as stipulated under the rules. Merely informing the nearest forest subordinate in writing 24 hours in advance should suffice.

(6) The inclusion of wild boar (the meat of which is regarded as a delicacy) in *vermin* has led to its extermination from most forests of Bombay State, particularly along the coastal tract in areas close to the larger towns and cities which offer a ready and lucrative market for this commodity. In spite of its prolific breeding, this unfortunate animal has not been able to withstand its widespread slaughter on a commercialized scale and has by now become more or less a rarity in areas where it once roamed in huge herds. It is, therefore, now essential to remove the wild boar from the list of vermin and to regulate its hunting by including it in small game.

(7) The present powers vested in the revenue department officers for declaring dangerous animals as cattle lifters etc. are grossly abused in most cases by ordering the destruction of carnivora on the slightest provocation, without caring in the least to understand either the causes or the effects of such drastic measures. It stands to reason that, in comparison with others, the officers of the forest department would be far more capable of exercising such powers in an intelligent and judicious manner.

(8) Although the prosecution of offenders has been made obligatory under the new act, very few magistrates are inclined to attach any gravity or importance to offences committed against wild life. The general tendency is either to throw out cases on technical grounds or, in the event of conviction, to let off the offenders with a nominal fine, which, more often than not, is even lower than the compensation which the forest officers them-

selves are normally empowered to levy when compounding forest offences under the Indian Forest Act. This frustrates the very object of prescribing compulsory prosecution under the new act, with the maximum penalty on conviction of 6 months' imprisonment or a fine of Rs. 500/- or both. If a minimum term of imprisonment (say 10 days) for offenders convicted under the game laws could be made obligatory, it would have a most salutary effect and would act as a good deterrent. Another very necessary step against such offenders should be the immediate suspension or cancellation of their arms licences and, in more serious cases, even the confiscation of their weapons to Government.

In conclusion, one can hardly over-emphasize the imperative necessity of taking effective steps to check the grave menace to wild life from crop-protection guns. This is a problem of the first magnitude in most parts of our country today, particularly so in Bombay State where licences for such guns have been issued rather indiscriminately in very large numbers in recent years. In, fact, this menace has by now assumed such enormous proportions that no amount of legislation for the conservation of wild life can have a chance of succeeding unless and until something definite is done to neutralise the thousands of so-called crop-protection guns in our villages, which are invariably being grossly misused for commercialised poaching on an unprecedented scale. As a D.F.O. and Game Warden, I have myself apprehended large parties of such poachers armed with their own or borrowed crop-protection guns, who slaughter game indiscriminately over water holes in summer, irrespective of either species or sex, and trade in the venison, hides, feathers etc. Although this serious problem has been engaging the attention of the Indian Board of Wild Life for quite some time now, it is unfortunate that it has so far defied an effective solution, with the result that the immense havoc already caused, particularly during the post-independence era, continues unabated, to the great detriment of our dumb denizens of the wild.

M.A. RASHID.

Himalayan Shikar

"Do you know the world's white-roof tree ?
Do you know the windy rift,
Where the baffling mountain-eddies chop and change ?
Do you know the long day's patience,
Belly down on frozen drift,
While the Head of Heads is feeding out of range ?
It is there that I am going....."

It is there that I have been, three times now. And though I hesitate to recount my experiences, since I do not deny a certain jealous attitude where my favourite sporting grounds are concerned, there is the thought of the good that might ensue from wider knowledge of the rapidly spreading destruction of wild life in even the distant Himalayas, and of the possibility that true sportsmen of the right type will visit the area.

The train conveys you to Tanakpur, at the base of the Kumaun, with the Kaliganga debouching into the plains in a wide sweep of boulder-strewn river bed, surrounded by thick forest. Changing to a bus, one eventually reaches Askot, that is if the road has not suffered one of its frequent breaches ! From Askot, still in the middle-hills, one enters the real Himalayas, the high hills of scree and cliff, tempered by occasional glimpses of proximate snow. Walking up the Goriganga, one reaches Milam, the last village on the Indian side of the border and situated at the base of the second longest central Himalayan glacier. Milam has already suffered the fate of all nature. Barhal and tahr, red bear and musk-deer, have been fairly wiped out of that bleak valley by the patient and expert stalking of village poachers. Knowing this from past disappointments, I made my way up a subsidiary valley that gushes forth a boisterous glacial torrent into the Goriganga, some miles from Mansiari. I had with me as guide, friend and co-philosopher, one Kesar Singh, a Bhotia who finds the tedium of a settled agricultural life no more attractive than the insensitivity of trade, even pastoralism not coming upto his expectations—the flocks are too noisy and their care leaves no time for thought! He has chosen the itinerant life of a poacher who lives by selling barhal meat and skins and other curious pelts for a living. My intimacy with such a paragon of vice needs some explanation: he was going to poach in any case and my company might serve to wean him in the long run, from his erring ways.

So, up the Ralam valley we went. At its confluence with the Gori, the Ralam Gad is entrenched in a narrow defile, but broadens out in patches as one proceeds to the source, the Shankalpa Glacier, some twenty miles or so away. A list of the wild life to be found in the valley would include barhal or Himalayan blue sheep, tahr or Himalayan goat,

—H. K. Dang.

The Home of the Barhal

A Himalayan Shikari-Guide

H. K. Dang.

ghooral, black bear, snow leopard, musk deer and martens among animals and monal, the only pheasant observed. There is one small village which is occupied during the short summers, a few miles below the glacier, but no other habitation. The approaches are tortuous and the effect is a relative isolation born of inaccessibility. In fact, the area north and north-east of the Ralam is largely unexplored and I have had the good fortune of setting some of my exploratory rambles in the glaciers of that delightful region.

Our first few days in the valley were disappointing, with not one tahr or ghooral obliging us in our search, and the routine of hair-raising scree-ridges and early-morning starts began to have their effect on city-spoilt sinews. But eventually Kesar Singh's predictions were substantiated in the form of a pair of tahr. Tahr generally move in pairs and favour certain localities over others, through preference for a special brand of coarse moss; also, their habitat is one of plentiful scree and broken cliff country, just below the line of snow in summer. The method of locating them is to start out before dawn and make as wide a traverse as possible till the quarry is sighted. Kesar Singh's knowledge of the terrain should have helped us, since a pair of tahr seldom move from one stretch of hill-side except when migrating downwards seasonally. As it was, we saw our first pair only after much arduous labour, which is, however, rendered enjoyable now by the soothing perspective of time. I spotted the animals with some difficulty and after an elaborate stalk executed at the instance of Kesar Singh, the male was brought down.

Here a brief digression about rifles. A light, high-velocity rifle is the best weapon for hill shooting. Allowance must always be made for both the gigantic scale of the high hills, as well as for the refraction of the bullet owing to changes in air-pressure between different elevations. As an example, though I judged the tahr to be two hundred yards, I set the range at three and fired one foot below the heart to compensate for the refraction, since the animal was some hundred feet below my level.

The habit of tahr of keeping to one locality has led, in much of Kumaun where arms licences have been issued of late indiscriminately, to their virtual disappearance from the well-frequented glacier valleys. My mentor informed me with a touch of sadness that villagers, less scrupulous than him—I took this exception with a grain of salt—have actually been locating the breeding grounds of tahr and butchering them in cold blood during winter months when mobility, their prime defence, is so obviously restricted. Whatever the truth regarding Kesar Singh's own ethics, it is clear that the tahr are very scarce. With barhal I have experience of such decimation, for the Milam valley, once proliferating with barhal, is now virtually devoid of any large herds. It is the gragariousness of barhal which is both their defence and the cause of their vulnerability. Even though rifles are not as common as shotguns here, the villagers' expertise and intimacy regarding the terrain and habits of these animals make them a deadly threat. Barhal and tahr breed very slowly, as is to be expected from their temperate to cold-temperate environment, and it is easy to reduce their numbers to the verge of extinction.

I do not detract from the significance of wild life elsewhere when I declare wholeheartedly that, owing to their occurrence in an area which is, *per se*, valuable to the nature-lover and which has historically been the reservoir of Indian and, in particular, Hindu mythology and philosophy, the preservation of high Himalayan species is of primary importance. Their relatively greater vulnerability, particularly in snow, renders them even more deserving of our protection. Their complete disappearance from the hills would be a minor tragedy for the country at large, no less than for those few who still lean upon Himalayan experiences for moral and spiritual guidance.

I have myself accounted for the death of many barhal and tahr, but I justify the destruction—if you wish to call it that—by the generous returns in the way of lessons which I received from Nature in those mountain fastnesses. If the sportsman's approach is not wanton, he can be said to improve himself and enrich the world by his experiences. These for me, have included a contact with and knowledge of rare animals, seldom seen and known to only a few of India's people, which I shall attempt to portray here.

The musk deer, visitors to the popular Pindari glacier may recall, is a perky little animal inhabiting the snow-line rhododendron and birch brakes. Its commercial value lies in the highly odourous substance contained in the sex gland of the male contained in its body near the tail. This has led to its relentless persecution and callous destruction, the village-poacher, an otherwise admirable character, again being the engine of destruction. Yet India has permitted the export of lakhs worth of musk*, mostly, I believe, to the United States ! How this is reconciled with the official policy of protecting the animal is beyond my limited comprehension. In Garhwal-Kumaun, this poor creature has been well-nigh hounded out of existence, its characteristic habit of always lying up in the same lair or group of lairs, rendering it an easy victim of the poachers' ingenuity. The Ralam valley has a number of these animals and I had the fortune to often see them bounding across snow-filled gullies.

The snow leopard is a rarity anywhere and the Ralam is no exception. In a side-valley of the Goriganga I spent three nights in a pit dug in snow, sitting-up over a natural kill of barhal. With Panch Chuli dominating the frosty night scene it was a memorable three days, but of snow leopard there was no sign till the third morning, when, as we got up all cramped and stiff, a lean figure, unmistakable in the feline grace and fabulous leap, bounded up a chimney of rock. Here again, the valuable pelt has led to much nefarious activity, though poachers are not generally upto the ounce's cunning and skill in the habitat over which he rules, like a tactful king.

Marten are trapped all over Kumaun with ingenious stone traps, baited with fresh meat, but show no sign of reducing in number. Red bear are definitely not to found in the Ralam valley, though black bear are to be often seen occasionally at great heights, on snow.

*[Elsewhere will be found a brief note on musk—Ed.]

Monal and snow cock are the sole species which seem to thrive right under the poacher's nose. Perhaps it is the lack of aptitude of the latter at flying-shots, or may be they don't consider a mere 5-pound bird profitable enough ! The villagers generally tend to leave monal undisturbed, at least this is so in the higher reaches of which I speak. Monal have, I am told, been recently given Government protection. I am the last to oppose protection as such, but all that this unreasoning 'armchair' decree can mean is that now I shall not be able to shoot monal without forsaking principles ! It certainly will not deter the inhabitants of Mansiari or Milam or Sipu village from slaughtering monal, or barhal and tahr for that matter, as they have been doing so long. This sort of irrational protection seems to favour at every turn the wrong-doer and in the end it will offer a scarcely resistable temptation to the legitimate sportsman.

The temptation is great to continue the argument and then to cease all argument and go on to panegyrics that would convey nothing of importance from the strictly wild life angle. For there is no end to the possibilities of the high hills. Beyond Ralam there is always Kala Baland, another glacier, never before seen by human eye. Beyond Kala Baland, there is Chirring Mabang, equally desolate and beautiful, and beyond...one can never enumerate them, one can only choose from a feast that defies choice. But there is a nagging thought which destroys peace of mind, there is a nightmare vision of the Himalayas being 'civilized', of Nature being defiled. But there is also a faith, a faith which preaches reconciliation and the 'golden mean', a faith which gives confidence and breeds optimism—the faith that prompted this article.

H.K. Dang.

Destruction of Mahseer in the Doon Valley.

Very large amounts of money are spent in other countries of the world in stocking rivers with fry of sporting fish, but alas ! here in our country, where rivers naturally contain the mahseer, next only to the salmon in sport and value, we cannot preserve what nature itself has planted in our rivers, leave alone adding fry at fabulous cost.

Due to lack of control and due to utter ignorance of villagers and local fishermen, the mahseer is so shamelessly exploited that the species will soon be exterminated and one would soon have to go to an aquarium to see a mahseer. What else can happen when

even spawning waters are bombed or blasted, poisoned or diverted and fish are collected, after drying the beds of streams where they spawn and where the little ones were to grow, thus ending their life cycle.

To give an illustration, if people think fish to be a commodity which is naturally to be used as food by the population, but at the some time it is not protected and efforts at propagation are not made, then what would happen to it? When even agricultural produce cannot keep pace with the needs of the population, inspite of all resources and efforts of the Government, then how can fish remain or multiply in face of no Government effort and of mass exploitation?

In the Doon valley the devil's own contrivances are used to destroy fish. These are used not to catch fish for sport or for the pot but for wholesale destruction. Some of these methods, I mention below.

In the Aglar nadi at Senji, below Mussoorie, a large number of *Paharis* gather with the first heavy showers in July, for what is known as the 'Machi ka Mela!' When fish come up laden with eggs to spawn, nature forcing them to go into these small streams to deposit their offspring which could not have survived in big rivers, where they would have been eaten up by other fish, tortoises etc., the *Paharis* collect a type of weed which they burn into ashes and throw into the water. These ashes are deadly poison for fish and their spawn. In a few minutes hundreds of big and small fish float dead in the water: some of these the *Paharis* take home and the rest are carried away by the stream to utter destruction.

This is the first attack on fish-breeding. Then come dead-lines, night-lines, nets and explosives. Whatever is left over of later migrations of fish is destroyed by the villagers in these mountain streams when the water goes down by erecting barriers of thorn and wood, through which the fish cannot pass to go down to the main rivers after breeding. They are then easily killed with stones and sticks and even guns, or by drying and diverting the water.

This happens in varying degree in all hill streams and when whatever is left of the fish come down into the lower rivers, these are disposed off by villagers and others with explosives, small-mesh nets etc. through which the smallest fish cannot pass.

There does not appear to be any law that applies to the stretches of streams which are outside the reserved forests. These streams are controlled by the Gram Panchayats who lease them out to contractors for fishing. It is not known if these contractors are under any restrictions as regards size of mesh for their nets, season of fishing etc. Where there are special fisheries departments, as in Himachal Pradesh and the Punjab, there is control in these matters and special staff to prevent fishing without permits and to control illegal practises, fishing in the close season etc. A friend of mine recently visited the Giri river,

near Solon, and found fishing guards on both banks of this river, one in H.P. and the other in Punjab territory, which passes through non-reserve areas at this point. Presumably the Gram Panchayats were functioning here as well, yet persons were fishing with rod and line under the control of the fisheries department. There is a similar department in the U.P., yet they do not appear to have any control over similar areas in that State and the result is wholesale destruction of fish in waters outside the reserved forests.

To prevent the above, the U.P. Government should protect the fish of the rivers, as in the Punjab, as a national possession. Even if under the new Gram Panchayat system the villagers have the right to the fish in rivers which pass through their areas, surely the fishing should be done with due regard to close seasons and rational methods, which will ensure the perpetuation of stock. Further, stretches of the rivers should be preserved for rod and line fishing only, for sportsmen and tourists, and if any local fishing associations or societies wish to protect rivers and conserve and increase fish stocks through their own efforts, they should be encouraged to do so.

Bombing, poisoning and netting should be made cognizable offences and deterrent punishments awarded to law breakers. The civil, police and forest staff should be empowered to intercept offenders under rules of suitable fishing legislation and especially under the Explosives Act as regards bombing of rivers.

At present the situation as regards fishing and fish-destruction in the sub-montane tracts of the U.P. is a typical instance of 'nobody's business' except in the waters passing through the reserved forests, where there is some semblance of control through the forest department. For instance, it was heartening to find on my recent visit to the Song river at Sat Narain that a member of the staff of the game branch of the forest department had hauled up several unauthorized people netting fish in the reserve area. If this interest could be kept up and extended by the Government to the non-reserve areas, there are good hopes of fish propagation.

S. Gurkirat Singh Mann.

The Indian Board of Wild Life.

A critical review

I. INTRODUCTION.

The Indian Board of Wild Life may be described as a 'child of India's independence'. After 1947, with the general re-organisation of her institutions, the Government of India commenced an examination of India's forest policy, which had stood from 1898. This forest policy declaration had contained no reference to wild life, and India's top foresters realised that this was an omission.

At the same time the efforts of Colonel R. W. Burton, a retired Indian Army Officer and a veteran sportsman-conservationist in India, working with the support of the Bombay Natural History Society, were being directed to focus attention on the perilous position to which India's wild life had come after the war. He urged the creation of separate game departments to take over the care of wild life, asserting that the forest departments of the country had failed to protect the game animals and birds of India and were too pre-occupied with other duties to do so; this suggestion was naturally resisted by the forest authorities of the country, led by the 'chief forester' of India, the Inspector General of Forests.

While this discussion was going on, the Advisory Committee for Co-ordinating Scientific Work in India appointed, in 1951, a sub-committee of leading sportsmen and wild life enthusiasts "to examine and suggest ways and means of setting up National Parks and Sanctuaries for the conservation of the rich and varied fauna in India". The Committee felt that no substantial or lasting progress in protecting wild life could be achieved in the absence of "a permanent central organisation assisted by an advisory committee, to co-ordinate wild life." This was the genesis of the Indian Board of Wild Life.

The board was inaugurated at Mysore in December, 1952, the Government and the Maharaja of Mysore playing host to the delegates, who, apart from the Chief Conservators of Forests of all the States, included representatives of the Bombay and Bengal Natural History Societies, some leading conservationists and the Director of the Zoological Survey of India. The meeting was presided over by the Maharaja of Mysore, but the motivating force was provided by the then Inspector General of Forests, the dynamic Shri M.D. Chaturvedi, I.F.S. Under his guidance the deliberations, which lasted three days, covered the whole ground thoroughly, by separate committees dealing with various subjects—the *Steering Committee* entrusted with the work of co-ordinating the work of other committees; the *Administrative Committee* to discuss and recommend changes in the constitution and composition of the board, indicate ancillary state organisations and suggest ways and means for financing

the organisations to be set up; the *Legislation Committee* to take stock of existing laws and rules and other measures for the protection of wild life and to suggest modifications and new measures to be adopted and also to recommend measures in respect of publicity and liaison; the *National Parks Committee* to deal with national parks and sanctuaries, zoological parks and gardens and protected animals and the *Trophies Committee* to consider the topics of export and import of animals and animal products.

A constitution was drawn up for the board and formulated by the Government of India in their Resolution No. 7-110/51-R., dated the 4th April, 1952. The Chairman of the board is the Maharaja of Mysore, there being two Vice-Chairmen in the persons of the Inspector General of Forests to the Government of India and Maharajkumar Dharmakumar Sinjhi of Bhavnagar. There is a Secretary-General in the person of the Director of the Zoological Survey of India and an Honorary Secretary who is a permanent official in the Ministry of Agriculture at Delhi. There are four Regional Secretaries for north, south, east and west, M.D. Chaturvedi, H. H. of Sandur, E. P. Gee and Maharajkumar Dharmakumar Sinjhi of Bhavanagar respectively. The Chief Conservators of Forests of all States in India constitute the main membership of the board and in addition there are representatives of the Bombay and Bengal Natural History Societies, the Bird Watching Society of Delhi, the Wild Life Club of the Forest Colleges, Dehra Dun etc.

It will be thus seen that the board is primarily a Government-nominated advisory body, whose recommendations form the basis of the suggestions made from time to time to State Governments on matters concerning wild life. The presence on the board of selected sportsmen and conservationists, either in their personal capacities or as representatives of organisations with similar or parallel objectives, ensures that the public view-point is not overlooked and that acceptable recommendations based on sound, practical lines are made.

The board, in addition, has a Bird Wing and a Zoo Wing, the members of which are all specialists in their field, to advise on matters concerning the protection of bird-life and the management of zoological gardens in India, respectively.

Under the terms of the Government declaration, the board is to meet every two years and it has met twice so far (apart from the inaugural meeting), once in Calcutta in 1955 and again in Delhi in 1958. The main work of the board is carried out by its Executive Committee, which comprises of the Chairman, the two Vice-Chairmen, the Secretary General, the Honorary Secretary and the four Regional Secretaries. Actually, the day to day work is done by the Inspector General of Forests and the Honorary Secretary of the board, who are located in Delhi.

The Executive Committee is to meet once in six months and so far it has met six times, as follows, incidentally setting a useful convention by meeting in sanctuaries by rotation.

1953. In Kanha Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh.
1955. Twice, Jan-Feb. in Calcutta and May in Ootacamund.
1956. In the Gir Sanctuary, Saurasthra.
1957. In the Periyar Sanctuary, Kerala.
1959. In the Shivpuri Sanctuary, Gwalior.

Since the protection of wild life, along with the management of the forests of India, is a responsibility of the States, the Government of India on the advice of the board has asked the State Governments to form their own wild life boards to advise them on policy in connection with wild life matters. So far the following States have formed such boards:—

Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Manipur, Tripura, N.E.F.A., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bombay, Madras, Mysore, Andhra, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Kerala.

The State wild life boards are composed of both officials and selected non-officials and are under the chairmanship of the Ministers of Forests, with the Chief Conservators of Forests as the secretaries. The regional secretaries of the Indian board are also members of State boards in their respective jurisdiction. State boards are expected to refer questions to the central board and in turn to accept and implement, where possible, the recommendations of the Govt. of India, which are based on the decisions and resolutions of the main board.

A close liaison is meant to be secured between the State boards and the central board through the respective regional secretaries, but this has not materialised in practice. Moreover, the States have been generally slow in implementing the recommendations of the Indian Board of Wild Life. Meetings of the State boards have in some cases not been held for long periods (viz., Assam and Bihar) while other States have not yet formed boards, notably U.P. This, to a great extent, has stultified the work of the central board, nor can much be done without the co-operation, enthusiasm, and initiative of secretaries of State boards, i.e. the Chief Conservators of Forests, who are the 'key-men' in the whole set-up.

II. REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE BOARD

For the purposes of this review the work of the Board may be conveniently classified as under:—

1. Publicity and Education.
2. National Parks and Sanctuaries.
3. Protection of Individual Species.
4. Wild Life Legislation.
5. Research.

1. Publicity and Education.

Realising that no amount of legislation is of use unless there is a strong backing of public opinion, the board organised, in 1955, Wild Life Day. This was a success and from the next year the festival was extended to a Wild Life Week, to be celebrated as far as possible in the first week of October. The week is devoted to publicity and propaganda for the preservation of wild life and for education of the young, by taking them to sanctuaries and zoos and by talks, cinema shows etc.

The board has published, through the Government of India, some booklets, such as "India's Wild Life", "Why Preserve Wild Life." etc. etc. Other works which are under print are "Our Animals" and "A Guide to Field Censuses." A wild life wall map for schools and institutions was brought out by a Calcutta firm of publishers under the directions of the Zoological Survey of India.

The board has recommended the preparation of documentaries and the establishment of a film library, but no progress has been so far made in this direction.

In its 3rd Session (1958) the board recommended that Nature Lovers' Clubs, Societies and Associations should be established in Universities and other institutions and States have been asked to sponsor such organisations and assist them financially. So far, no progress is discernible in this direction, however.

In 1956, the board organised an All-India Essay Competition on Wild Life and an All India Exhibition of Wild Life Pictures. Unfortunately, nothing like this has been repeated since.

The wild life conservationist is emphatic in stating that the greatest damage to wild life is being done by crop-protection guns. The board has discussed and recommended various measures to prevent the destruction of wild life by this means, but little progress has been achieved.

As a part of the education drive, the board recommended that illustrated brochures dealing with national parks and sanctuaries be brought out and distributed freely. One such booklet is "Keoladeo Ghana, Bharatpur", brought out by the B.N.H.S.

The zoo wing suggested that professional zoologists be appointed in zoos as guides and 'question-houses' be established in all zoos. In order that zoos may function efficiently and to the maximum advantage of the public, a zoo manual is under preparation by the zoo wing.

2. National Parks and Sanctuaries.

Suggestions for the creation and management of national parks and sanctuaries have been an important activity of the board. In the very first year of its existence, it recommended

that 18 national parks be created, either new or by conversion of existing sanctuaries. Of these only the Kanha National Park and the Shivpuri National Park in Madhya Pradesh and the Hazaribagh National Park in Bihar have been created. The board has prepared a model bill in respect of national parks for the guidance of States.

In 1957, the Vth meeting of the Executive Committee of the board recommended that "a separate warden and other staff, with special aptitude to man wild life sanctuaries and State parks, was desirable". The recommendation has only partially been implemented by some States and not at all by others.

The creation within a sanctuary of an 'Abhyaranya' or 'sanctum-sanctorum', where complete immunity from disturbance is assured to wild life, was recommended by the board but has not been given effect to in any of the States except Mysore (Bandipur Sanctuary) and Madras (Madumalai Sanctuary), as far as is known.

States can expect assistance from the Centre to the extent of 50% of their development expenditure on sanctuaries and national parks and several States are taking advantage of this, notably the U.P., Madras and Bihar. Impressive buildings, including look-out towers, and roads etc. are being erected in sanctuaries for the benefit of the public, but in most cases the wild life is missing, having become severely depleted or being still subjected to poaching and disturbance from exploitation.

The board recommended that in all the river valley projects, the authorities concerned should, in the first instance, declare a suitable area surrounding the project as a 'protected area', in order to encourage water birds and other animals. Specific mention was made of Tungabhadra dam and Nagarjunasagar. This suggestion has yet to be implemented by State Governments.

3. Protection of Individual Species.

Preservation of species threatened with extinction has been one of the most important activities of the board. The lion, the one-horned rhinoceros, the swamp deer and the wild buffalo have all been recommended for complete protection. The *thamin* or brow-antlered deer has been protected by creating a sanctuary in Manipur. The pink-headed duck and the *cheetah* or hunting leopard are extinct, though they are included in the list of protected species. Although the board has recommended that the great Indian bustard be completely protected, it is still being shot while the Kashmir stag or *hangul* has not yet been declared completely protected in its parent State.

One of the notable recommendations of the Indian Board of Wild Life was for the insurance of the future of the Indian lion by the provision of alternative homes for this animal,

which is now confined to the Gir forest. As the result of the U.P. Government offering Chandraprabha Sanctuary near Varanasi as a new home, three lions were transplanted in 1957 to this area and released in a specially fenced enclosure. At the time of writing, the experiment can neither be said to have either failed or succeeded, and only time will tell. Species which have been recommended for protection, completely or partially, are:

(1) snow leopard, (2) clouded leopard, (3) Indian wild ass, (4) musk deer, (5) pigmy hog, (6) black buck, (7) Indian gazelle, (8) four-horned antelope, (9) flamingo, (10) grey jungle fowl, (11) pea-fowl, (12) Jerdon's courser, (13) mountain quail, (14) caracal, (15) Indian swamp deer, (16) Phillip's rusty-spotted cat.

4. Wild Life Legislation.

The question of having efficient and up-to-date legislation for the protection of wild life in the various States was one of the first problems before the board. There is need for revision of existing laws and rules and the necessity for special and adequate legislation to effectively protect wild life. The Bombay Wild Birds and Animals Protection Act of 1951, which is a comprehensive piece of legislation concerning all areas and all types of exploitation of wild life and backed up by the whole State machinery, was suggested as a model for other States to follow.

A model National Parks Bill for the guidance of States wishing to create national parks was drafted and sent to the States. The southern regional secretary drafted a model Wild Life Act for the southern region States.

Unfortunately, only a few States have revised their wild life legislation upto now and in many States the old rules under the Indian Forest Act for the Reserved Forests and the Wild Birds and Animals Protection Act for the remaining areas are continuing. The last named act is practically a 'dead letter' in most States.

Indirect protection to wild life in India is afforded through controls under the Sea Customs Act on the export of wild animals and birds and their products, such as skins, feathers, horns etc. This has been arranged in 3 categories:

(1) Completely banned for export.

(2) Export banned except as specimens for bonafide educational or scientific research institutions, at the discretion of the Secretary General, Indian Board of Wild Life.

(3) Export for commercial and other purposes allowed under permits. By the association of the Secretary General of the board with the export departments, the board ensures that the export rules are implemented.

It is the opinion of the board that wild life has suffered not so much from the lack of legislation as from the absence of proper machinery to implement the existing laws. Therefore, in 1958 the board recommended the establishment of separate wild life services in the States. But except in some States where special game staff on a limited scale exists, mainly for the protection of sanctuaries, this recommendation has not been implemented.

5. Research.

As far as wild life research is concerned, we have yet to make a beginning in our country. The present state of our knowledge regarding the life history, habits, habitats and economic importance of our birds and other animals is so meagre that no scientific management is possible.

Research regarding the habits of animals, the role of each species in the balance of nature, the conditions of the habitat necessary for each species, and the number of each species necessary for maintaining and perpetuating the race in a balance with its surroundings, are all important matters which need well planned investigations spread over a number of years.

Censuses and surveys play a very importent part in the scientific management of wild life resources, including control of species where necessary. It is a matter of great importance to us in India to be able to speedily and cheaply survey and census our wild life, and a beginning has yet to be made on these lines.

The board does not have any facilities by way of staff and funds to conduct research. The board, therefore, requested the Zoological Survey of India to conduct ecological studies in respect of important mammals, such as the one-horned-rhinoceros and the lion. The progress is very slow because no funds have been provided for the purpose.

III. CONCLUSION

The Indian Board of Wild Life, during its short period of existence of about 7 years, must be credited with having made several important recommendations to the Government of India which in turn has passed most of them on to the States, but comparatively few have been implemented. The reasons are not far to seek. Since the Indian Board of Wild Life functions as a purely advisory body and since wild life is a State subject, the State Governments are not bound to accept and implement the resolutions passed by the former. The power and authority of the board are, thus, restricted. Moreover, the board does not have any funds of its own and has to depend on the Government of India for even expenditure of a fundamental nature. However, it would be wrong to convey the impression that the board and its chief officials are not conscious of its limitations. Actually, it has made recommendations for creation of a 'wild life fund' and to amend the Indian Constitution so

as to empower the Government of India to enforce the implementation of its decisions, but the Government of India have been unable to do anything in the matter so far.

In our country, we have started wild life preservation very late, and for this mistake we have paid a heavy price in the form of some precious animals viz., cheetah, mountain quail and pink headed duck having been lost to us. Therefore, the strengthening of the authority of the I.B.W.L. in order to make it a more effective organisation brooks no delay.

The board needs a technical establishment of its own. In fact, in order to deal with a country of this size, regional establishments would be necessary. What should be the composition of these establishments is for the experts to decide. To start with, perhaps the well established Zoological Survey of India may have a special wing to deal with problems referred to it by the I. B. W. L. Then a wild life ecology branch at the Forest Research Institute, working in collaboration with and through State forest departments, suggests itself.

With the expansion of the activities of the board, it appears that more technical sub-committees are necessary. Immediately, committees for national parks and sanctuaries, for wild life legislation and for publicity and education are indicated. Subsequently others may be necessary as follows :

(1) Censuses and Surveys.

(2) Ecological studies.

(3) Fishing.

As a result of the expanded activities of the Board and the wide-spread interest created by it, the Government of India are of the opinion that the constitution framed for it in 1952 needs revision. This matter was discussed at the Vth Meeting of the Executive Committee (1957) but the new constitution has not yet been finalised.

The scope of the board could, with benefit, be changed so as to make it a national counterpart of the I.U.C.N. (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources). Wild life cannot be preserved without maintaining and, if possible, improving its habitat. Therefore, the board to be effective has to maintain close liaison and co-operation and integrate its efforts with those of the Central Board of Forestry, the Soil Conservation Board and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

It appears that co-ordination at the central level for all matters relating to wild life is difficult and leads to delays. It was, therefore, suggested by Shri Ranganathan in 1956 that regional conferences would make for quick disposal and quick execution. One such conference was held in Mysore in 1956 for the southern region. This might be made a regular feature for all the regions. It appears to be necessary to have a uniform pattern of

close seasons for a region and group close seasons for several species and this could be worked out for different regions.

Though a certain improvement in the position of wild life is discernible in some of the areas in charge of forest departments, nothing is being done to improve matters outside forest areas. The board may do well to focus attention and make practicable suggestions in this respect, though unless there is adequate staff to take care of these areas, mere legislation would fail to achieve the desired results. Here we come up against the greatest obstacle, for States are extremely reluctant to spend money on game protection, the solitary exception being the Punjab, where there is a separate department for the areas outside the reserves.

In the matter of publicity and education, much ground remains to be covered. It is essential to concentrate on the youth of the country and, therefore, youth organisations such as the Bharat Scouts, the Girls' Guide Association of India, the N.C.C., A.C.C., universities, colleges and schools must be enthused to take up nature-study. In order to initiate and interest the younger generation in the matter of wild life, youth hostels and youth camps would prove invaluable. It may be mentioned that no other field of scientific investigation is as interesting and absorbing as the study of living animals, where even an ordinary person can, without any elaborate equipment, make worthwhile contributions. The youth of India has energy, zeal and industriousness. What is wanting is interest. Therefore, it rests with the I.B.W.L., being a national organisation, to undertake measures calculated to achieve this objective.

But no single organisation can sufficiently gear the community to ensure adequate, nation-wide consciousness of wild life. The work of the Indian Board of Wild Life must be backed up by societies and associations for the preservation of wild life, which must bring pressure to bear, through force of public opinion, on State governments, with whom the task finally rests.

S. A. Shah.

Wild Life Howlers

(From examination papers on wild life management)

1. **Food Chains:** In some animals it is seen that the excreta will come out in the form of a chain.
2. **The Hawk Deer:** (Hog ?) is found in parts of Travancore in South India.
3. **Tyne:** is a bird.
4. **The Hangul or Kashmir Stag:** has one point in its antler.
5. **The Great Indian Bustard:** found in Mysore and U.P.
6. **Peck order:**
   (a) some birds have got their membranous outgrowth on the head, as in hens etc. This is called 'peck order'.
   (b) speak order. This is the way of speaking of different wild life in different ways i. e. cuckoo, elephant etc.
7. **Migration:** birds run from Siberia to India to find out the ideal place for food.
8. **Wild Life:** is censused by the 'Dry and Beat' (Drive?) and by the 'Cursing method' (Cruising ?).
9. **Pelt:**
   (a) is a small grain, shot to the animal or bird. It may be a stone or a lead-shot from a buck-shot gun or capsule.
   (b) A kind of weapon to scare the birds (catapult ?)
   (c) Throwing of stones at animals which is a habit of mischievous children.
10. **The Swamp Deer or 4-horned antelope:** has 2 points or 2 horns on the brow.
11. **The Lion:** is confined to the Gur forests of Saurasthra.
12. **The Pigmey Youk:** (Hog ?) is found in Kashmir.
13. **Protected species:** The above-mentioned animals and birds are on the verge of extinction due to the indiscriminate hunting by Maharajahs and bigwigs. So the sensible naturalists of India realise the necessity to put an end to these in-sensible deeds.

Miscellaneous Notes

1. "NATURE CONSERVATION"

Extract from the opening speech at the General Assembly at Athens of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources by Professor ROGER HEIM.

"May the study of history, the contemplation and the analysis of the world that surrounds us in these Mediterranean lands, so rich in human genius but nearing overpopulation and poor in fertile land, bearing their fine heritage of glorious ruins but bereft of their forests; may also the efforts accomplished by certain nations provide us with a lesson which should make modern man conscious not only of his genius but also of the destruction his improvidence has wrought. Genius has sometimes demanded a heavy tribute from happiness.

We are here, once more, in the presence of the spring from which man has drunk but in which his impatient hand gropes for water and finds less and less to slake his thirst; we are here, then, to take our bearings and to see where the acts of men have led us. We have need of orators to enlighten the people and of the people to convince governments—and these are here represented; and of enlightened public opinion to put a check to human folly and hold off the disaster that threatens to engulf us—and the onus of this is on the Press. The age of the atom is the age of cancer, cancer which destroys bodies of men and cancer which blights the land. Let us delude ourselves no longer, but let us turn to the lessons of history, to the story of Castile, of Mesopotamia, of Mexico, to that of the nations that encompass the Sahara and of those that bound the Mediterranean.

But we cannot cause the tides to turn. We must have knowledge of how to build our ship and set our sail, and face the tides and squalls of these new times that have befallen us, and I mean that either we must sink or we must compound. It is here that we must show the scope of our imagination and the strength of our conviction. It might be necessary to concede, let us say, a few yards of the Serengeti National Park to save a few miles elsewhere. We must give a new significance to the world landscape: it shall mean the adaptation of the countryside and its architecture to the life of the environment, under the aegis of ecology, which will lead to an intelligent, reasoned collaboration between nature and the genius of men. Let us not forget that man's conception of nature has varied with the ages, like poetry or painting (this is to be seen in Greece better than in any other land), and that nature in "Daphnis and Chloe" is not seen as in "Attala" or "Rene", and that Buffon's conception of it is different from Darwin's. Let us not forget that for 50 centuries, from the steppes of Siberia to the garrigo of the Mediterranean, nature has been deeply marked by the hand of man. Side by side with the essential protection, the conservation, the preservation of the remaining riches of the earth which must be safeguarded, as you have safeguarded the Temple of Jupiter and that of Apollo,

a science has arisen and seeks to uncover the new laws which would govern the adaptation of technical progress to nature and which will lead us to a harmonious, peaceful and vital concept of the framework of man's daily activities. We need oases of two kinds and these must subsist side by side: we need sanctuaries that nature may survive and refuges for man's daily happiness."

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2. FROM "A BUNCH OF OLD LETTERS"

(Letter from Edward Thomson to Jawaharlal Nehru)

Scar Top,
Boars Hill, Oxford,
January 2, 1938.

Dear Nehru,

I agree that human business comes first. But the other animals matter also and something can be done for them at the same time. If some species gets extinct, then a mischief which can never be repaired has happened and a piece of immemorial India has been thrown into the abyss. And it has always seemed to me the utterest impertinence, the way a handful of rich and ruling people assume that they have the right to destroy the features of one's country, for you and for the generations that follow.

You can do some things to help. First, if any animal or bird is protected because it is nearly extinct, it should be an offence in law to offer it for sale. You have some nearly extinct birds whose flesh is openly sold. Also rhinoceros' horns, which the Calcutta Chinese and others believe are first-rate aphrodisiacs, are sold. It would inflict no real hardship if articles that were sought after for such degraded purposes were driven out of being profitable.

But the most important thing is to create a growing public opinion that kills the 'show-value' of sport so that Indians will show us the way in the west, by refusing to throw up their hands in admiration when told that this or that Raja has butchered 500 tigers (as Rewa has), or countless scores of thousands of sand grouse, or can drive a car at 30 miles an hour while shooting down black-buck. Kill the thing's prestige, as public opinion in South Africa has already largely killed it (and in Canada also). Revive the *ahimsa* feeling and spread the feeling that your beautiful wild creatures are part of India and part of an inheritance which other people have no right to destroy.

Yours ever,
EDWARD THOMPSON

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3. WILD LIFE IN CANTONMENT FORESTS.

While attention is focussed on the larger refuges of our wild life, the Reserved Forests and particularly the Sanctuaries and National Parks in them, few stop to consider the preservation of wild life in the Cantonment Forests of the country.

Cantonment Forests in the Punjab fall under Sec. 4 and 5 of the Punjab Land Protection Act and suitable rules could be framed under these sections for protection of wild life. Such wild birds and animals as are found in these forests are, in most cases, in great need of protection and assistance. Cantonment forests are well known to be open to trespass, wood-collecting and shooting. The use of air guns and catapults, in addition to the more lethal .22 rifle and shot gun, takes a heavy and steady toll of minor mammal and bird life in them.

In most cases these forests could, with a little voluntary effort and sensible management, be made to serve the recreational needs of the troops stationed near them. Here is how a comparable group of people in the U.S.A. overcame the problem in a similar set-up.

"Navy Personnel Conquer Game Problem." (Abstract from Conservation News, Washington, D.C.)

"Navy personnel, by hard labour and ingenuity, conquered a tough game management problem at the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, N.J. The station has a sportsman's club composed of officers and enlisted personnel and civilian employees. In an effort to increase the quail population, annual grain crops were planted. Deer, however, ate the grains. The Navy then turned to local resources. Chicken—farmers supplied tons of natural fertiliser and seedsmen contributed *weed* seed separated from seed—supplies. Working in their spare time, club members spread the fertiliser on 110 acres of fire—breaks and other open areas and planted the weed seeds. Now the station has both deer and quail."

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4. 'WILDERNESS AREAS' FOR INDIA

In the United States of America (to quote from the bill to establish a 'National Wilderness Preservation System') a *wilderness*, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscapes, is recognised as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man and where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.

Approximately two percent of the land of the United States remains in a wilderness state. This covers sections of national forests, national parks, wild life refuges and Indian reservations. The criterion of a 'wilderness area' is that it must be primitive, that there must be no motorable roads allowed in them and that human exploitation is eliminated or reduced to the

minimum. No shooting is permitted but fishing is allowed. Their main object is to serve "the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use and enjoyment by the people, in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness".

The idea of 'wilderness' originated with a group of persons in 1935 and our Society is honoured by having, as one of its members, Mr. Bernard Frank, an American forester now in India to assist in research on Forest Influences, who was the co-founder of the 'The Wilderness Society of America'.

To-day millions of Americans, young and old, enjoy the pleasures of hiking, riding ponies and camping in the wilderness areas of their country, where they can drink to their satisfaction of the joys of nature, strengthening their hearts and minds and refreshing themselves by the stimulus of primitive country, un-marked by mechanical civilisation.

In India we have nothing approaching such areas, except in certain parts of the Himalayas and some of the other mountain systems such as the Western Ghats, the Nilgiris, the Palnis and the Assam hills. In the plains, some of our larger sanctuaries, such as the Hailey National Park of the Uttar Pradesh, the Monas and Kaziranga Sanctuaries of Assam, the Periyar Sanctuary of Kerala and the Madumalai Sanctuary of Madras, partake of the 'wilderness' atmosphere to some extent. But in most places the motor highway and the jeep-track is opening up the areas, in the name of 'development'. In the Tehri Garhwal forests of Uttar Pradesh there is a plan to link up Mussoorie and Simla by a jeep track, through what is some of the best trekking and camping country in India. Further east, in the drainage of the Ganga and its tributaries, similar motorable roads are destroying the primaeval peace of the mountains. The same is the case in the Himalayas of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Kashmir. Prior to our attaining independence the only visitors to these parts, besides officials, were sportsmen after the wonderful mountain—game. To-day buses of tourists 'invading' Kashmir, Simla and the Kulu valley, clutter up the better-known resorts, which are measured in terms of their accessibility by motor vehicles!

Cannot this tourist movement, which has admittedly reached considerable proportions in all our mountain country, be canalised in a fresh direction by the creation of 'wilderness areas', to be ever preserved as *sacrosanct* from motor-roads and mechanical civilisation, where the tourist in search of a change or the delights of nature will have to walk or ride, and where the camping—accommodation and arrangements will be of the simplest?

* * * * *

5. "OPERATION NOAH"

From Africa comes a dramatic account of how the animals in the Kariba lake, created by the Kariba dam on the great Zambesi River, are faced with starvation and eventual death from

the rising waters of the river. On December 3rd, 1958, the dam was closed and the lake, which is expected to reach when full an area of 2500 sq. miles of water, commenced to fill up. This is not expected to be completed before 1962 but, though rather late, the authorities and the public have become alive to the threat it offers to thousands of animals. The process of flooding the Zambesi valley, which is flat and wide with many rocky hills, is resulting in many islands, some of which will be permanent. The rich riveraine forests along the edge of the river will disappear forever and cannot be replaced. It is in these forests that are to be found many of the larger mammals, which have, from time immemorial, used it as a 'travel lane' between the low country of east Africa and the drier country lying inland.

Now a large number of animals are becoming marooned on the new islands. These include many species of antelope, monkeys, porcupines, felines, mongooses, rock rabbits etc. The larger mammals are also there, such as the elephant, buffalo and rhinoceros. Although most of the animals can swim, they are reluctant to leave their home of their own will and are holding tenaciously to the rapidly dwindling points of land, sometimes until they are so emaciated that they cannot swim to safety even when driven into the water.

It was not possible to drive animals to higher land to safety before the flood reached them, because of the broken nature of the country and the thick bush. In the meanwhile the animals, crowded together on the diminishing tops of the land, present a pitiable sight. Baboons and monkeys having eaten all grass and insects, have become so exhausted that they can scarcely run. Rock-rabbits are perching in trees and can be caught in landing nets. Even birds which normally can be expected to look after themselves are reluctant to fly away. Many of the sedentary species, like robins and babblers, have become so weak that they are unable to fly to the main land several miles away. Guinea fowl and black partridge are emaciated to an amazing degree and fall a prey to the lesser predators and even to baboons or monkeys living along with them. The African rhinoceros is reported to have an aversion to water and so, of the larger animals, their rescue will be most difficult. Elephant and buffalo, lions and leopards will presumably be able to swim to safety. Among the submerged stumps and floating debris, there are crocodiles and on the islands there are large numbers of snakes.

The Rhodesian Government started rescue work in November, 1958 but the staff and equipment were quite inadequate. By Feb. 1959, they had rescued some 300 animals. The best technique was found to be to get the animals into the water and either capture them or guide them swimming to the main land. Some of the antelope take to the water readily but impala, the largest of the species, will not be driven into the water and game nets have to be used to capture them. In all cases, tranquilizers are being used to lessen the shock of handling and to make transport easier. Rescued animals are being put into two reserves. The whole operation represents one of the major environmental upheavels ever to befall the animals and birds of the African continent and offers unique opportunities to those interested in research. The

Fauna Preservation Society of the British Commonwealth has launched a public appeal to save the animals marooned by the rising waters of the Zambesi river. This operation has been nicknamed "Operation Noah" and it require very much more effort than is at present being put into it. It is estimated that a sum of £10,000 at least will be needed and planning extends to sending out suitable boats for use on the lake with auxillary out-board engines, tents, clothing and equipment for crews and workers, anaesthetics for the animals and medical equipment and snake-bite outfits. The whole operation will continue into well past 1962.

[*Editor*. We are indebted for details of this operation to the Oryx magazine, the journal of the Fauna Preservation Society of the British Commonwealth.]

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6. MUSK

Copy of letter No. 654—(4)/EO/18621 dated the 14th October 1958 from the Director, National Chemical Laboratory, Poona—8 to the Secretary, Indian Board for Wild Life, New Delhi.

We received your letter and have noted the contents very carefully.

Muscone is the active constituent of musk. The dry musk pod of a full-grown musk deer may weigh about 28 grams, of which the muscone-contents will not exceed 0.3 gm. Therefore, the musk deer is no longer regarded as a particularly rich source of muscone. It may also be pointed out that several genuine substitutes of muscone are already available in the market. The most important members of this group are exaltone, exaltolide, ambretolide, cis-civetone, dihydro-civetone etc. First three components of this series are being regularly manufactured in Switzerland, America, Germany and Britain. Probably, cis-civetone is also available from Swiss sources. Swiss scientists have also established actual synthesis of muscone, and it is quite possible that muscone is already being marketed under some trade name as such, or in the form of blends. The price of these genuine musk substitutes may vary from Rs. 1500 to 3000 per 500 grams.

During the last few years in the National Chemical Laboratory, we have been carrying out work on the preparation of musk-like products using Indian raw materials and have developed new methods of synthesis which are commercially feasible and are superior to the methods described in the literature, including those developed by the Swiss scientists. Some of our methods are already undergoing pilot plant trials. Employing our results, it should be quite possible to prepare subsitantially large quantities of these musk substitutes in India without any serious difficulty.

In view of this development, it seems perfectly justifiable to discontinue the old practice of killing musk deer for supplying raw materials to the perfumery industry.

A Trip to the Corbett National Park

It was on a bright, sunny morning during Holi of March, 1959 that we set out for the Corbett National Park. There were three of us—a retired tea planter, a forest officer, both ardent wild life conservationists, and myself. I was a young tyro in this whole business of wild life, whereas my two companions were veterans who had seen most of their days in north-eastern India. We were heavily loaded in an old Studebaker car of 1948 vintage and had, in addition to a driver, a cook. This was our second attempt to go to Corbett (previously Hailey and still previously Ramganga) National Park, our previous attempt last year at the same time having been frustrated by inability to arrange bungalow accommodation. This time we had taken no chances and the three different authorities to whom one has to write for bungalow and elephant—the D.F.Os. Ramnagar and Kalagarh divisions and the Game Warden, Kotdwara—had been approached well in time.

Our start from Dehra Dun was rather delayed because we had to comply with a request from one of the leading gardeners of the town, who wanted us to see her display of seasonal flowers. We cleared the town eventually and after a pleasant run eastwards through sal forests, we reached Rishikesh. Shortly outside the town we spotted a group of wandering animal trappers, locally called *Sansi*, who were accompanied by several mangy and half-starved pariah dogs and carrying some dead animals. We pulled up at once and asked them to stop. There were three porcupines, a small sized monitor lizard and a very large pangolin or scaly ant-eater. We questioned the men, who were armed with long and stout spears and they told us that they had killed the animals in a nearby forest. They also stated that their services were in demand by the local forest authorities for killing porcupines in their plantation areas. When we asked them why they had killed the pangolin, they had no answer except to say that it made holes in the ground. The monitor lizard was a very poisonous animal, according to them!

Although we were in a hurry, the forest officer, who was incharge of a training institution which had a wild life club and wanted the pangolin for display in his club room, bargained with the men and eventually persuaded them to accept Rs. 20/- for the skin of the animal. We made a start on skinning it by the roadside, but soon gave it up as we realised we were being delayed. The men assured us that they would deliver the skin of the pangolin to the local taxidermist in Dehra Dun and so we went on. We gave them a chit and Rs. 5/- as an advance and promised to pay the balance on our return two days later. They said they were camping on the outskirts of Rishikesh and acually lived in Dehra Dun.

We took a couple of photographs of the extraordinary group, the men lean and be-draggled, with unkept hair falling over their faces, the emaciated dogs sniffing at the carcasses

and obviously hungering for their share of the meat. We drove on, discussing the superstitions which are responsible for destruction of so many of India's harmless creatures and the apparent hopelessness of the whole situation. Here were a group of people whose normal avocation was catching and killing any animal (and bird, for that matter) which would yield them food or some gain, operating under the very noses of the local authorities! We resolved to report the matter to the Game Warden, which we eventually did and we were later glad to find that the local officers have been asked to put a stop to the killing of pangolins and monitor lizards.

When we reached Hardwar, where we had to cross the Ganges, we had some difficulty in finding our way to the boat-bridge because all sign-boards were written in Hindi. As a result of these delays, we had to halt for lunch at the Chila forest rest house on the other side of the river, which is a favourite camping place for shikaris and tourists in the Lansdowne division. We had not made much progress so far and we still had a hundred miles to go to reach the Boxar forest rest house, which had been reserved for us.

After a hurried lunch, we started repacking. Suddenly, we discovered that the tin of ghee, which the cook had brought along, had spilled in the bag in which he was carrying it. I, who had been appointed by unanimous consent to be in charge of the commissariat on the trip, was naturally furious. My temper did not improve when the cook commenced to scrape up the spilled ghee with his hand, ladling it into the tin with his open palm in typical style. But I received little encouragement from my companions, who merely poked fun at the situation and laughed at me!

Hurriedly getting into the car, we turned her around and drove straight out of the gate and down what lookcd to be the obvious road to Lalkua and the Corbett National Park beyond. After going some distance, the road began to deteriorate from the point where it entered a *rao* or dry river bed. The car soon commenced to take an awful battering on the boulders and ruts in the uneven track. "Surely this could not be the road to the Corbett National Park," we thought. And as our suspicions began to grow into a certainty, we met a couple of Gujar women washing their clothes. On questioning them, they laughed at us. "You are not on the forest road but on an extraction path," they said. "The road to Lalkua is in the other direction!" Quite exasperated, we turned the car around and went back to the bungalow, only to find that the correct road took off to the east and that we had missed the sign-post in the flurry of leaving the place after the ghee incident! Stopping for a moment to give the driver (allegedly) a chance to 'check' on every thing—a habit of his, as we discovered later, which was only a pretext to smoke a cigarette—we speeded up. We were driving merrily along the road, relieved to be finally on our way, when all of a sudden the car stopped. Thinking it to be the usual air-lock in the fuel pump, the result of the heavily

adulterated U.P. petrol, we stopped and opened the bonnet. To our horror we found steam enveloping the engine and the water from the radiator completely drained out through a broken hose-pipe connection. Our first reaction was one of apprehension that the car had seized up, but this eventually proved not to be the case.

We set to work making a make-shift joint with soap, cloth and wire. After emptying all our water into the radiator we pressed on the self-starter and much to our relief, the car started. But after going about half a mile, the joint worked loose and all our efforts were in vain. Realising that this might well be the end of our trip if we could not fix the hose-pipe connection, which had worked loose as the result of a poor welding job done some months ago when the radiator core had been changed, we sat down by the roadside in despair and had a cup of tea. The unfortunate cook was sent back to the nearest steam we had crossed some two miles back for more water, without which we could not move in any case.

By this time evening was approaching, when suddenly an empty truck with a few people in it came along from the opposite direction. To our delight the local D.F.O. turned out to be one of the passengers in the front seat and he could not have been more helpful. After consultation with the driver and handy-man of the truck, it was decided to tow the car back to Chila from where we could send the radiator across to Hardwar, or if necessary to Dehra Dun, for re-welding. We had, by this time, resigned ourselves to the inevitable. Chila, we understood was a good place for wild life. The Belgian Ambassador had passed through that very afternoon to try and secure photographs of elephants, which were reported to drink in the river close to the bungalow. We, however, contented ourselves with a stroll around the place while our luggage was being un-loaded and the radiator was being dismantled. After we had settled down and bathed we chatted with the D.F.O. and had dinner with him. It was very comfortable and cosy in the bungalow, with the Petromaxes hissing. For me, the novelty of camping was there, while my two companions were like old war horses back in their natural surroundings.

Early next morning after breakfast we left by the daily bus which plies between Hardwar and Kotdwara, leaving the car behind to be brought on by the driver when the radiator was ready. We had already lost one out of the three precious nights we had allowed ourselves for the trip and so could not delay any longer. On our way to Kotdwara we visited the Mallan Deer Park nnd Sanctuary. This is constructed near a temple, which is an attraction for the local people and the local forest department authorities had made a good job of it. There were some very nice houses for tourists and three very tame deer, including a sambhar. We learnt that a leopard had broken into the park by burrowing under the wire and had scragged one of the deer. It had luckily not been worse and the forest dept. were constructing a long, rubble-masonry wall all round the base of the fencing wire in order to

prevent a recurrence of this. But they had forgotten the overhanging trees, which my experienced companions pointed out to them, urging them to remove all trees standing near the wire fence, as leopards could easily climb up and drop into the enclosure.

We reached Kotdwara in the afternoon and were welcomed by a visiting Conservator of Forests, who was an old friend of one of us and who happened to be camping there. After a sumptuous tea, he arranged a jeep for us and we set out on the last leg of the journey when it was almost dark. Our car had arrived while we were having tea and transferring our luggage from it we left it behind, as the road ahead was not fit for vehicles of this type. We never imagined, however, that the road could be so extremely rough. It cut right through the Siwaliks to the Patli Doon, which constitutes the Corbett National Park and how vehicles were plying in two-way traffic on this road was amazing. The road twisted and turned like a serpent, rising and falling all the while with a very bad surface and the driver did not improve matters by driving fast.

However, we reached Boxar without further incident at about 9 P.M. and unpacking we proceeded to settle down for thc night. I went in the jeep to alert the Game Warden, who was camping a few miles away at Paterpani. We then rather reluctantly allowed it to go back to Kotdwara, as the driver was obviously keen on getting back for his Holi fun. It was a delightful, cool moonlit night and we slept well fortified by a couple of rums. I had gone in the jeep to meet the Game Warden and on the road had seen a large herd of cheetal feeding in the grass not very far from the bungalow. This had whetted our appetite with the prospect of seeing plenty of animals the next day and taking photographs.

Early next morning after just a cup of tea we set out in the Game Warden's pick-up, which he had sent from Paterpani the previous night, to meet the elephant which was to take us around the park. The country looked very suitable for game and we were all keyed up. Close to the spot where the elephant met us, there was a *machan* built by the side of the road and we were shown the stake at which over 20 baits of young buffaloes had been tied for tiger by a film unit of the U.P. Government, which had recently been in the locality for filming wild life. The place was littered with skulls and bones and my companions marvelled at the open space in which the baits had been tied. They were not at all surprised to learn that the tigers had not been obliging enough for being photographed by daylight, though from the abundant pugmarks all round the machan and in the river bed there must have been several very well fed tigers lying up somewhere close.

Mounting the elephant we set out to look for them. Crossing and recrossing the nullah and occasionally going through high grass, we suddenly heard the whoof of a tiger in some high grass across the stream. Immediately everyone got most excited and I, who was sitting near the tail of the elephant, nearly fell off as the mahout swung her around! The cameras

were hurriedly got ready and we started circling to locate the tiger. Four people on a pad (for the driver had also come with us) is far too many for successful manoeuvering of this nature and it was no wonder the tiger escaped in the rather confused efforts to find him. My companions assured me that he was a very cunning tiger, as he had slipped away without showing any indication of his presence except that first whoof of obvious disapproval at our encroachment on his domain. "Tigers," they said, "either bound away in the grass or sneak away very quietly in this fashion. They also somestimes 'stayed-put' and for all we knew, we might have passed him in the long grass."

Still speculating as how the tiger had got away without giving us a glimpse of him, we went on. Suddenly within a short distance, we saw a solitary wild tusker elephant feeding on the edge of the jungle on the other bank of the stream. As we approached him, he became aware of our presence and turned around and faced us. We then saw that he was in full 'musth', his cheeks stained with oily fluid which was exuding from his temples. He was not at all afraid of us but on the contrary came forward in a challenging manner. When we had approached him close enough we stopped and the two cameras with us got busy.

All the while the wild elephant kept on coming forward, occasionally stopping and shaking his head and taking our scent with his up-raised trunk. I was just beginning to panic and the mahout was also obviously getting nervous, when by a coincidence the cameramen had their fill of photographing him at the same time! Though there was the stream bed and the high bank on which the elephant was standing between us, to me it seemed a perilous situation. We turned away intending to make a detour to avoid the elephant and the last we saw of him was his up-raised trunk questing us, as he kept on coming forward. I felt that we had left the spot in the nick of time. The mahout suddenly discovered that this was, after all, not the shortest route to Paterpani and that the motor road was the best and closest way to get there! Chaffing him, but making allowance for his natural reluctance to take our elephant into possible danger, we turned back and rejoining the road, and eventually got to Paterpani, where the Game Warden met us. He was not at all surprised at our encounter with the elephant and said that there were many elephants and tigers around his camp and that every night he heard noises quite close to the bungalow. As for tigers, he said that they made a practice of roaring every evening within a few hundred yards of the bungalow!

After a cup of tea, we went back in his pick-up to Boxar where we had our lunch and some rest. In the evening we set out for Paterpani again and now we decided to split up. I sat on the elephant while one of my companions climbed into a *machan*, or watch tower, built in an open space some distance away from the bungalow, and the other went somewhere with the Game Warden. We saw some wild pigs only. On turning back towards the machan where we had arranged to meet, we learnt that an elephant had passed the machan

and within a few yards of it, offering excellent opportunites for photography. The other member of the party just then returned with the Game Warden and he immediately went off with his camera and telephoto lens on the track of the elephant, which had gone towards the sal forest on the high bank, through some high grass.

He had an interesting game of hide and seek with the elephant, which on hearing him approach, hid itself in a hollow in the high bank behind some trees. We had a grand-stand view from the machan of him dodging about and retreating backwards when the elephant started coming out, suspicious and taking the scent from the ground of the human foot-steps. The sun was sinking and the elephant, which was covered with red dust which he had thrown on himself in the river bed, was a fine sight, according to the photographer. It was a youngish elephant, though powerfully made, and had small tusks. He told us that his hiding himself in the manner in which he did, may have been due to timidity but that the way in which he eventually came out, silently and cautiously, and the manner in which he kept on tracking by taking the scent of the footprints, indicated that he was a cunning animal and potentially dangerous. Unfortunately, owing to a defect in the camera, few of the pictures taken of this elephant came out successfully.

By this time it was dark and we had to call it a day. After another cup of tea with the Game Warden, we went back to Boxar. On our return journey we drove along some of the roads and saw in the head-lights of the car two large herds of cheetal, numbering about 50 to 70 each. We stopped the car and kept the lights on and counted them as they crossed the road. I had never seen so many deer in my life and was terribly thrilled. It was sad to think that these grazing grounds of the cheetal and hog-deer would one day be inundated by the waters of the Ramganga lake, which would be created by the dam which is contemplated by the U.P. Government in the Ramganga gorge, where it debouches through the Siwaliks into the plains.

After another very pleasant night in the Boxar bungalow, we got up early intending to go to Dhikala and then drive on to Kotdwara by the regular or upper route. While the cook was giving us breakfast, he said that he had seen a tiger when he had come out to relieve himself in the early hours of morning. "It was standing under the tree", he said, "and both of us rushed in the opposite direction. The tiger made off into the high grass outside the bungalow with a grunt and I into the kitchen, where I locked myself in !" When I checked the commissariat later on, I found that all the tea, sugar and milk had been exhausted and the driver said that the cook had been drinking it all night—a clear case of 'cause and effect', whichever way you look at it !

We were ready before the sun rose and getting into the Game Warden's pick-up, we drove to Dhikala across the level flats of the Ramganga which lie on either side of the river. Dhikala is situated on the highest of these flats and we were told that this would be the only

area which would not be submerged by the lake. Even so, this would be a small part of the original area available for the cheetal, hog dear and pig now grazing here, and the effect on the large numbers of these animals of such a drastic reduction in their grazing areas can well be imagined.

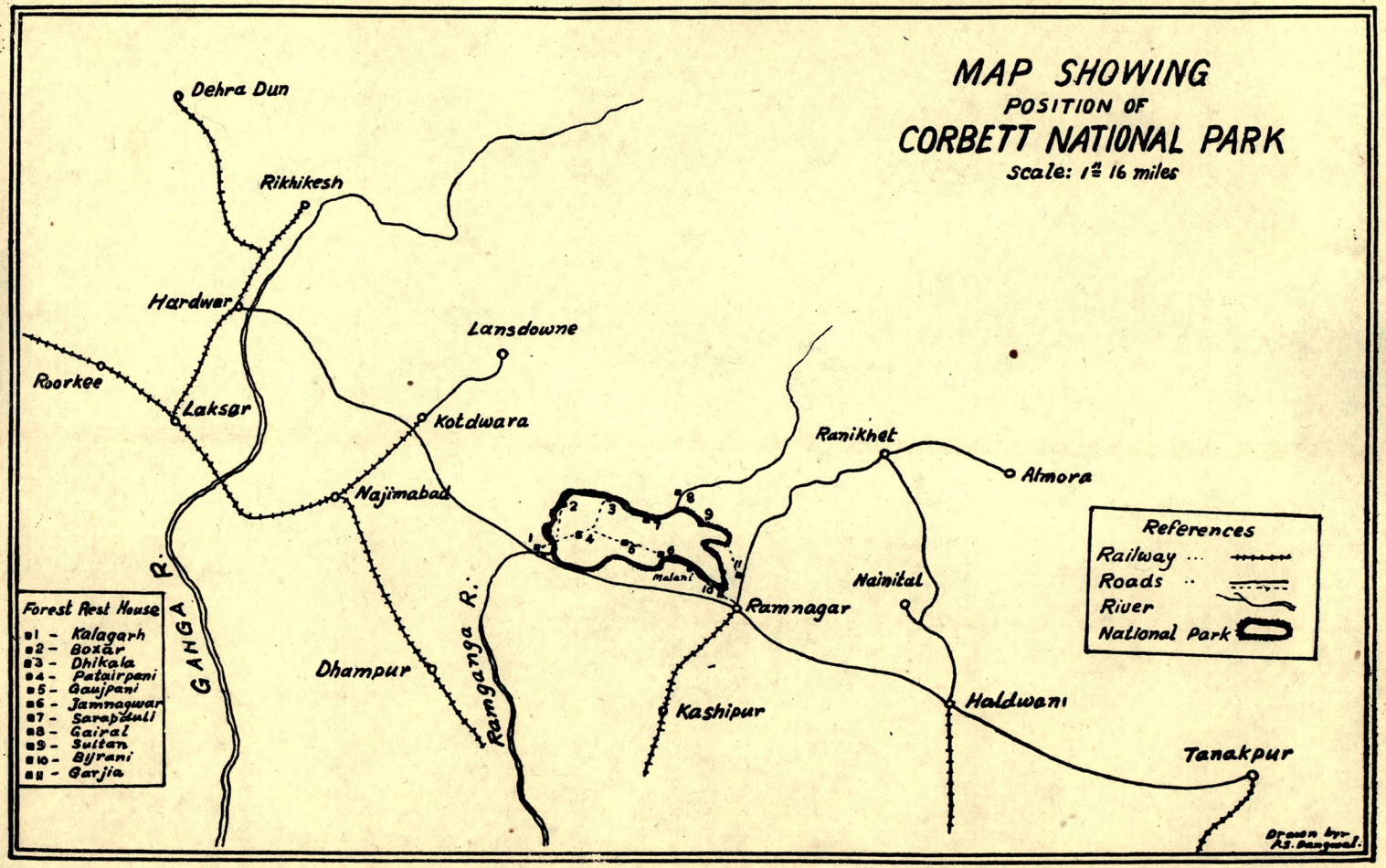
At Dhikala we ran into comparative civilization again: sleek American cars of Delhi tourists enjoying the beauty of the scenery and the jungles, finely built and appointed bungalows for tourists etc. There were guides and there were elephants for taking the people around—in fact this was the nearest approach to a 'dude' camp of the American variety which I could imagine. We were told that extraordinary luck sometimes attends the visitors who go out on elephants or in cars to see game. On one occasion, a whole bus-load of children had witnessed a tiger stalking cheetal deer. On another occasion a couple of sportsmen had followed a tiger on an elephant for a long time. All this made us more regretful than ever at having missed seeing the tiger we had put up the previous day at Paterpani.

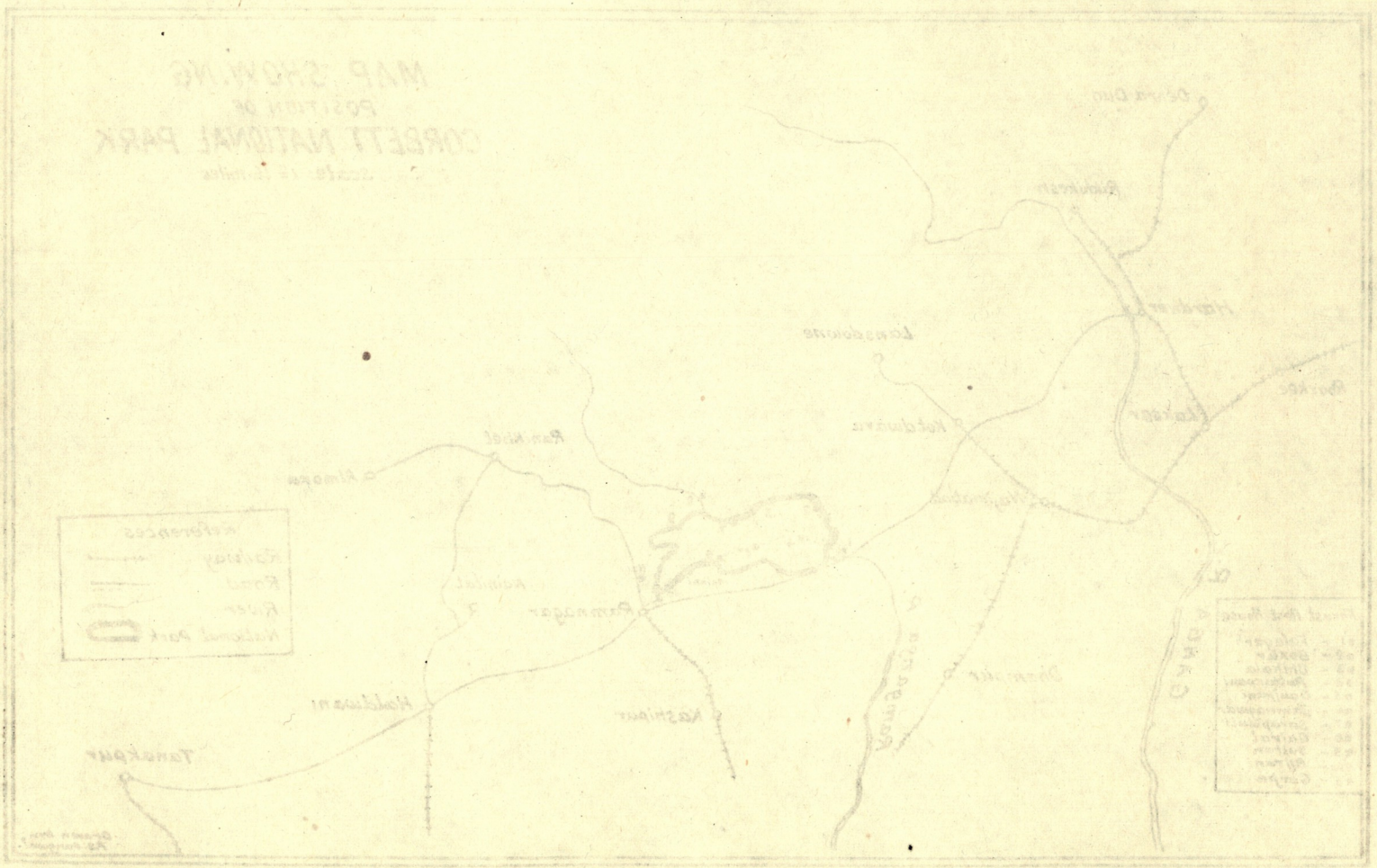
What came in for our criticism at Dhikala, was the artificial manner in which the look-out towers had been built. One of us had, earlier in the morning, climbed into one of these towers in an attempt to photograph the herds of cheetal which were grazing around while the others had tried to round up these deer and move them towards the tower. But we had had no success. It must have been quite obvious to even the most self-respecting cheetal deer that the towers implied some danger. Surely they could have been camouflaged to some extent or hidden in the groups of trees, instead of standing them out in the open, like tall water-towers for everybody to see from almost a mile away!

We left Dhikala after eating our sandwiches and chatting with the local Range Officer in his quarters. After an interesting run over the long upper road which winds over the Siwaliks through some very interesting country, we reached Kotdwara, where after another sumptuous tea at the hands of the Conservator and his wife, we loaded our car and set out for Dehra Dun.

All of us had to be back at work the next day and although we would have loved to have had another day or two in the Corbett National Park, for our appetite had been whetted by what little we had seen and there was always that elusive tiger which one was hoping to see, we had to leave. On our return journey, although we drove through the forest late in the evening we saw only a few pigs. It was quite late when we reached Rishikesh and there was a storm brewing. But we stopped near the town to locate the camp of the Sansis. They were living in some miserable hovels by the side of the road but their mongrel dogs were very alert. We paid for the pangolin, after getting an assurance that it had been delivered, and drove on to Dehra Dun, which we reached at midnight. So ended a most interesting and for me an exciting, visit to the Corbett National Park.

S. Gupta.


MAP SHOWING
POSITION OF
CORBETT NATIONAL PARK
Scale: 1" = 16 miles
Dehra Dun
Rikhikesh
Hardwar
Roorkee
Laksar
Lansdowne
Kotdwara
Najimabad
Ranikhet
Almora
Naimital
Ramnagar
Kashipur
Haldwani
Tanakpur
Dhampur
GANGA R.
Ramganga R.
Malani
Forest Rest House
1 - Kalagarh
2 - Bozar
3 - Dhikala
4 - Patairpani
5 - Gaujpani
6 - Jamnagwar
7 - Sarapduli
8 - Gairal
9 - Sultan
10 - Bijrani
11 - Garjia
References
Railway
Roads
River
National Park
Drawn by
A.S. Bangwal



"It Happened In Northern India"

1. The Tyro's Bag

The party consisted of the local D.F.O., his visiting cousin who was an S.P. in a neighbouring district, and two others from..... They were mounted on three elephants, some armed with rifles and others with 12-bore shot guns. As they proceeded through the forest, animals were observed moving through the tall grass, but it was difficult to identify what animals they were.

The youngest in the party was a European youth of seventeen and though lacking experience he had had sporting instincts instilled into him. When he was offered the shot he declined, on the plea that he could not identify the animal he was firing at, but he was told to shoot at anything that moved in the grass and it could be identified later. Many shots were fired into the grass by other members of the party, but the results were uncertain and wounded animals were not retrieved.

The party eventually reached the house of a local landowner, an expatriate scion of a Princely house, where they were entertained royally. When it grew dark they got into a jeep to return. With the aid of head-light and spot-light, out of a herd of cheetal which was met, they shot one stag in velvet and two other small stags with about 18" horns. The party broke up the following morning and decided to make a present of the skins and horns to the youngest of the party, along with a leg of venison. When his father saw what the lad had brought home, he was ordered to throw away the skins and horns and not to attempt to take them to the local taxidermist for fear of detection!

2. Two For The Pot

The Commissioner of..... .....Division went out shooting in the forests of one of his districts and an elaborate *bundobust* was arranged. The local D.F.Os. were present with their elephants. The shooting was unsuccessful but the Commissioner took advantage of the local rule which allows permit-holders to shoot cheetal for the pot, irrespective of sex or close-seasons and two such cheetal were shot. At the time of writing we have not heard whether the two cheetal in question were males or females but close-season it definitely was !

[Note : The Society has moved for abolition of this permission in the U.P. shooting-rules. Ed]

3. The Captain's Trophy

A Captain in the Army confided to a forest officer friend that he had shot a musk-deer. He took his friend into his room with an air of secrecy and showed him the skin, which was

kept in a box. The deer had been shot somewhere in the Himalayas of the U.P.. The proud sportsman was under the impression that the musk-deer was a protected species and he was fearful of the wrath of the forest department.

The forest officer had also read somewhere that the species had been recommended for protection by the Indian Board of Wild Life. On going back to his bungalow he spotted on the wall a calendar issued by the U.P. Game Department, and on looking into it he found that only the *female* and *young* of the musk-deer were protected in that State. He promptly informed his friend, who as promptly brought out his trophy and hung it on the wall of his drawing-room !

[Note : The musk-deer has been recommended for complete protection by the Indian Board of Wild Life. Ed.]

"And How They Do It Elsewhere"

1. Venison

(Extract from Loris, the journal of the Ceylon Wild Life Protection Society, December, 1958 Vol. VIII No. 2 Page 112.)

FROM THE LONDON OBSERVER

"Sir,

Your cookery expert recently recommended venison as "a good buy just now". People who buy venison should be aware of the illegal, organised, cruel shooting of deer in some parts of Scotland by men who come by night in cars.

On September 13, for instance, the *Scotsman* reported a case in which the police stopped a car after eight dead deer had been found by the roadside; they stated that the boot of the car was "like a slaughter-house floor".

Sir William Rootes, on whose ground the dead deer had been found, is reported to have said that they were all young hinds in milk and that their fawns were wandering on the hill-sides alone. Gamekeepers searched the deer forests for other injured animals, and two fawns, one dead and the other so badly injured that it had to be destroyed, were found. Many similar instances have been reported. Legislation seems to be long overdue.

Janet M. Smith."

2. Poacher's Prospect

2. *(Extract from the New York State Conservationist, Dec.-Jan., 1958-59)*

"Poaching prospects were poor in the middle ages. Anyone caught killing a deer in the Royal Forest in England was liable to have his hands cut off at the wrists. This punitive measure might be varied by notching or removal of the ears.

These were penalties for minor offences. If the punishment was to be drastic, the accused could be hung with his own bowstring."

3. Wild Life In West Africa

(Extract from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources Bulletin Vol. VIII.—Nos. 5 & 6, Dec. 1958.)

"A correspondent of the Union draws attention to a sad state of affairs which she has witnessed in a coastal district of Angola. From a point between Lubido and Benguella, this district extends southwards for some 315 miles and measures from 45 to 50 miles across. This is a savannah region which merges into bush infested with tsetse; it is uninhabited, and only twenty years ago it teemed with antelope and zebra which, today, are growing scarce. The reason for this decrease in numbers, states our correspondent, is that out of sheer idleness the inhabitants of the territories bordering the area make a sport of driving through it in jeeps and lorries and shooting at everything that moves. One hunter boasted of having shot 20 zebra, the carcases of which were left to rot, on a single expedition. Excellent laws have been enacted by the Portuguese authorities, but their enforcement over this wide area is entrusted to a single warden."

4. Wild Life In East Africa

(Extract from the Annual Report for 1957-58 of the Wild Life Protection Society of Ceylon. Honorary Secretary's trip to East Africa)

"I was impressed with the smooth and efficient running of these parks and the importance that is placed upon wild life in its place as a revenue-earner. Vast areas are devoted to the preservation of wild life; *in Kenya alone some 21,000 square miles* have been set aside, with the possible inclusion of more areas, in the near future, for bird-sanctuaries. Commercial poaching has been a large factor to contend with : it has been estimated 3,000 elephants were killed illegally in the Tsavo National Park and adjoining territory over a period of 2½ years. 1,280 elephant carcases and something over a thousand game pits were found over an area of 500 square miles.

It was estimated that this poaching resulted in a loss of revenue of not less than £100,000 during these 2½ years. The total task of stamping out this illicit trade was tackled with forthrightness in a well organised campaign. The efforts of those concerned were effective and the siutation was brought under full control in just under a year.

* * * *

The completely separate Government Game Department controls the Controlled Game areas, in which hunting is permitted on licence. This department is also in charge of game control throughout the territory. Licence fees for shooting are fairly costly, especially in regard to elephant, in that only two licences may be taken out at a cost of Rs. 975/- for the first and Rs. 1,3000/- for the second.

It costs Rs. 325/- for a licence to shoot a leopard and only one licence may be taken out. Shooting throughout the territory is strictly controlled, it being necessary to have a licence to shoot on private land, while the shooting of ducks, snipe, pigeons, etc., in controlled areas will cost Rs. 26/-."

5. Fate Of 50,000 White-Tailed Deer

(Abstract from American Forest Products Industries News Letter)

More than 50,000 whitetail deer in Michigan faced starvation this winter, according to Casey Westell, Jr., the Chairman of the Recreation and Wild Life Committee of American Forest Products Industries.

A blanket of snow 24 to 36 inches deep covered the country, coupled with weeks of subzero temperatures and high winds that drove the deer herds into the coniferous forests where there is no forage available for them. Even though the winter logging was continuing the deer had been confined by bad weather to certain areas, so that they could not graze on the tops and branches of the trees left by the loggers.

Indirectly, this is the result of trying to carry too many deer per square mile and not harvesting enough by shooting during the seasons. It would be far better to have less deer so that during the winter the food problem is not so acute and this would actually mean no reduction in the number of deer for hunting, because healthy deer produced more fawns.

6. Butchery Of Barhal

In the local taxidermist's shop at Dehra Dun, there were, recently, the skins of sixteen baby barhals, or blue sheep, being cured for a gentleman belonging to one of the local training institutions and purchased by him from Pipal Koti. The Bhotias of the higher

regions in this locality are apparently trading in the skins of these and other such animals. How they kill or snare them is a mystery, but sixteen skins—out of nearly 100 in a trader's shop in Pipal Koti—are an indication of the extent of the butchery that is going on.

In addition to the Bhotias, from a reliable source it is learnt that the..... .....of the.....Government are in the habit of killing barhal in season and out. Guarding the northern passes, they must have very little to do except to fire off their rifles in their spare time at such animals. While the Indian Board of Wild Life talks itself hoarse about controlling the destruction of our fauna, these baby barhals, less than one year old, are dumb witnesses to what is really going on in our high Himalayas !

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed "The Cheetal" very much and rather look forward to the next issue. It has been in my mind to get a local branch of the Society going in Lucknow after the parent group has a well defined programme going. There are several things about our game picture in the U.P. that disturb me—that is, judging from experience in the United States. As you no doubt know, in many of our states deer were extinct by 1900. To-day those same states have an annual kill running into the thousands ! I hope we can learn the lesson here in time.

Has any progress been made towards having the Society's suggested game-rules made into law ?

One thing that disturbs me is that our block system simply works to limit the block-holder. For instance: there is no reason that the law should not simply read 'cheetal in hard horn of 30".' As it is, a sportsman sits in his block listening to the shots in the night while poachers shoot the deer. The season on cheetal is too late in the year, moreover.

Again there is no *legal* way a sportsman can take a gond stag. Yet in the tarai they are being shot nightly "because they damage crops." Actually even in the industrial areas of the U.S. we have found that shooting buck only never reduces a herd, as one stag will service a dozen does. It would arouse sportsmen to protect the gond if they could

legally expect to collect a head. Unfortunately people tend to lose interest in what is of no use to them.

There are thousands of acres of jungle and grass land known as 'vested forest'. This land is now assigned as shooting areas, in unreasonably large tracts, to one person for shooting purposes for Rs. 20. A better use of these areas which no one party can hunt, is to call them class B forests and issue a Rs. 20/- permit allowing any sportsman to hunt but without any rights of reservation to exclusive use, as they do in Assam. The same should apply to areas like Tehri Garhwal, Kumaon and other hill areas, as is done in Kulu and Lahaul. Actually the forest dept. is losing thousands of rupees and sportsmen are being denied legal sport.

Unfortunately it seems that our new Game Warden system mainly concerns itself with checking up on block holders instead of catching the after-dark offenders who are slaughtering the game wholesale.

The great danger, as I see it, is the shooting of female animals, for there will always be some males who escape to continue to service the herds.

Another point I would like to see changed is in regard to the amount to be paid for shooting in a block. On the back of the game calender it now reads 'Indian nationals Rs. 20/- and foreigners Rs. 50/- etc.' I think it should be 'Indian nationals and residents Rs. 20' and 'others Rs. 50' etc., otherwise every person who holds a British passport and every person like myself, though devoting his life to service in India and paying taxes to support the country, would fall into the Rs. 50/- category. I'm sure that the rule is only intended to catch the rich sportsman visiting India and we all agree.

Lucknow, April, 1959.

Yours faithfully,
Andrew McDearmid.

* * * *

Dear Sir,

It seems that there are some unlucky circumstances at work in northern India which are destined to thwart the aims and objects and to frustrate a section of the people who will always be the most enthusiastic and active members of your society—I mean the 'legitimate shikari' who is also a keen and a good conservationist.

At the beginning of the last season in Dehra Dun, we were informed that annual small game licences were to be discontinued. This surprised some of us, and we at first suspected your society of having recommended this alteration in the game laws of the U.P. We are now convinced that it was none of your doing. The effect of this is that there will be fewer permit-holders and a temptation to even the keen conservation-minded, erstwhile permit-holder to get his shooting in any way he can.

The second blow was more recent and equally devastating. The peafowl has just been made a completely protected bird in the U.P. We are at a loss to understand the motive for this. Is the motive religious or is it for conservation ? If it is religious, may I remark that opinion about the religious sanctity of the peafowl differs from locality to locality ? I was taken on my first peafowl shoot in the Dun by a priest of the Rishikesh temple. In parts of the U.P. in the plains, and throughout Rajasthan, religious sentiment give the peafowl complete protection, inspite of the fact that it does considerable damage to crops. In the tarai and the foothills the peafowl is not protected by religious sentiment. Yet it is in no danger of extinction—particularly if sportsmen observe your suggestion of bag-limits.

Do they protect the wild turkey in America, where they know much more about wild-life conservation than we do ? It is almost exactly an analogy. Provided that the reasonable bag-limits suggested by your society are observed and provided that the forest department prevents poachers from shooting the birds when roosting (which they don't !), the peafowl is in no danger of extinction. It serves as a useful substitute for the Christmas turkey and, if shot by beating, provides very sporting shooting.

The third blow is that it has been decided that in future all permits for blocks will be issued from Lucknow. This is for the whole of the U.P. It is true that the allotment of blocks under the existing rules was not very satisfactory. They were supposed to depend on 'dame fortune,' but it was noted that the same sportsmen generally got the same good blocks. But at least the D.F.O. had a chance of discriminating between the legitimate shikari and the out-and-out poacher, from his personal knowledge.

Now this is all to be done at Lucknow where the influence of V.I.Ps., Shikar Clubs and well-to-do poachers will be given additional assistance. How can Lucknow, in spite of its incorruptible efficiency, distinguish between a poacher and a legitimate shikari who applies for a block, say, in the Saharanpur Division ? Moreover, the D.F.O. is reduced to the status of a mere cipher as regards wild-life preservation, whereas if there is to be any effect, the D.F.O., the Ranger, the Forester and the Forest Guard must all have a lively interest in it. But under the new rule they have no authority in the matter at all and the fate of our Dehra Dun birds and animals is still further jeopardised.

I am, Sir,
Yours very truly,
'Disgruntled Shikari-Conservationist.'

DEHRA DUN
May, 1959.

[It is a matter of regret that the Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India is not consulted before such decisions are taken and not even formally intimated of such changes in the rules and procedure. We are always ready to advise and assist to the best of our ability but are helpless if we are not even aware of impending changes in game rules and procedure. Ed.]

Review of Game Preservation in the U.P.

The Game Preservation Circle of the U.P. Forest Department was created in September 1956, the jurisdiction of the Conservator in charge being the whole State and his designation "Chief Game Warden".

The Circle was re-organised in the middle of 1958 on the retirement of the first Chief Game Warden, Shri S.S. Negi, who did much valuable spade-work in the formative stages. An officer of the status of Deputy Conservator of Forests, under the direct control of the Chief Conservator of Forests, was placed in charge and simultaneously the number of Regional Game Wardens was reduced from 5 to 3 and their status reduced from Deputy Conservator to Assistant Conservator. At the same time a number of posts of Forest Guards were created, one for each of the Ranges in the 3 Circles to which the charge was reduced. This latter move was with a view to protect wild life only where it is plentiful, i.e. in the Terai and Bhabar areas of the sub-montaine tracts of the U.P.

During the year 1956-57, a sum of Rs. 1,29,185/- was spent on demarcation and fencing of the Malan Sanctuary in the Lansdowne Division and the Chandraprabha Sanctuary in the Varanasi (Banaras) Division, the former to keep game from going out to the fields, apparently, and the latter to keep the lions, which were brought from Saurasthra, from going out of the sanctuary.

During the same year, 50 miles of motorable roads and 1½ miles of foot-paths were constructed at a cost of Rs. 97,965/- and repairs to existing roads were carried out at a cost of Rs. 2930/-.

A sum of Rs. 1,49,632/- was spent on the construction and repairs of tourist hutments, dormitories, staff quarters and machans in the sanctuaries and in the Corbett National Park. One tourist hutment and one dormitory were constructed in each of the 3 areas—Malan Sanctuary, Chandraprabha Sanctuary and Corbett National Park. Rs. 18,569/- was spent from the normal budget on the maintenance of the deer park at Saranath. Two elephants were purchased for Rs. 7650/- for the use of visitors in the sanctuaries.

The total expenditure was Rs. 6,53,473/-, including expenditure on overhead charges, out of which a sum of Rs. 1,83,104/- was received from the Govt. of India as a subsidy on a 50 : 50 basis, for non-recurring expenditure on such items as buildings, fencing, roads, machans, water-supply, tents, tools and elephants etc.

During the year 1957-58 a sum of Rs. 4,17,525/- was spent on the Game Preservation Circle, out of which Rs. 19,000/- was received from the Central Govt. by way of 50 : 50 subsidy on non-recurring expenditure. Of this, Rs. 62,775/- was spent on 'reinforcing' the fencing of the Chandraprabha Lion Sanctuary at Varanasi and Rs. 9,700/- on fencing of a

Deer Park in the Malan Sanctuary. Repairs to 52 miles of roads and paths in sanctuaries and parks cost Rs. 18,631/- and construction of new buildings cost Rs. 38,663/- while repairs to existing buildings cost Rs. 10,990/-. Seven machans were built at a cost of Rs. 4,968/- and arrangements for water-supply and compound improvements etc. cost Rs. 9,391/-

What is of particular interest is the number of poaching offences detected in the reserved forests during the year, which was only 55, out of which 1 was sent to court and 3 remained pending at the close of the year. The total amount of compensation realised by Game Wardens was Rs. 5,528/-. It is not clear whether this represents the whole story or whether the territorial forest staff also detected offences and realised compensation. A sum of Rs. 60/- only out of the compensation realised was paid as rewards to personnel.

The report for the year 1957-58 claims that "the scheme has been a success beyond expectation, as the creation of a separate organisation for the preservation of wild life had a psychological effect on the public. The numerous poaching cases detected during the year in almost all the regions and the deterrent punishments awarded to offenders, viz. heavy compensation and cancellation of gun licences, have had the desired effect on the public and illicit shooting has considerably declined. Reports of all poaching cases caught were sent to the Information Department to give wide publicity in the press."

A feature of the organisation, which still continues, is the provision of a jeep with four armed police guards for each Game Warden, for patrolling.

The most noticeable feature of the scheme to preserve wild life in the U.P. is the large amount of money being spent on works of a *capital* nature, such as buildings, machans, fencing and roads etc. This is in line with what is, or has been, taking place in most of the other States, ever since the Govt. of India has started assisting them on a 50% subsidy basis. Even allowing for this, the contribution from the State exchequer alone is impressive (Rs. 6,53,473/- during the financial year 1956-57 and Rs. 4,17,525/- during the financial year 1957-58 was spent on the Game Preservation Circle.

One could wish, however, that a greater share of this money were spent on measures of *direct* benefit to wild life, so as to provide the 'canvas' for the 'frame' which is being constructed.

The figures of expenditure on non-recurring items were Rs. 3,66,208/- in 1956-57, and Rs. 1,80,754/- in 1957-58.

A sanctuary or national park is a mere illusion unless there are sufficient animals and birds in it to be seen and enjoyed and as proof that wild life is being actually protected. By the same token, a few sanctuaries here and there do not tell the whole story, and we would welcome less of the 'tourist appeal' type of expenditure and more of the really 'protective' type of expenditure on wild life.

P. D. S.

Young People's Corner

My First Contact With A Tiger

Written by Michael Harrison, Allen Memorial School, Mussoorie in 1944.

Being my third last day at home after spending three months holidays, I decided to go out for a shoot and spend the night out.

Getting some tinned provisions together, I then saw to the bikes. We took some solution and other odds and ends in case of punctures and any sort of bike trouble that could be experienced on a cross country route. Then having had lunch, we got our guns and ammunition together, slung the weapons on our shoulders, tied the remainder of our light equipment to the bikes and set out on our trail at about 2 p.m.

The journey before us was about ten miles. Six of the ten were easy going, being the Ganges Canal bank, but the last four miles I am sorry to say were hard going. Diverging from the tarred road, we came on to soft sand. As you know one cannot ride on sand, so getting off we commenced trudging the remaining four miles, although riding now and then when we came to parts where cycling was possible. After about three hours hard going, we arrived at our destination which was at the foot of the Siwaliks, the name of the small village being Asafanagar.

This village was my favourite haunt, and the headman was an extremely hospitable man. On seeing us, he met us with "salaams" and cordially invited us to his house which was to be our residence for the night. We sat down on a spot for rest and then saw to our beds etc., after which we had tea that had been prepared for us. Evening was setting in, so I decided to roam about with my gun in the near vicinity of the village, expecting to bag a peafowl or jungle fowl. I was lucky in getting two jungle fowls, so hurried back and gave them to be cooked for dinner. At about 9 p.m. we were called for the meal, and we sat down to a good dinner. The fowls smelt very appetising and most tasty, so we had a hearty meal. The night was spent in comfortable sleep.

As dawn set in we were ready to leave for the day's shoot. Collecting a few beaters, we were soon in the heart of the forest. But to our bad luck, we never saw a feather in the first part of the day. During the afternoon things began to improve, and we came across herds of cheetal or spotted deer, some sambhar, a pig, and numerous peafowl and jungle fowl.

Coming out of a patch of extremely dense jungle, I came upon a dead camel. Examining it closely we noticed it had fallen prey to an enormous tiger, as the pug marks around the kill were huge and fresh. The tiger had apparently heard us and moved away from the spot, as blood was still oozing out of the hindquarters from where it had started eating.

Now we had to decide whether to sit up for it or not, as I was to leave for school next morning at 10 a.m. It seemed to be a wonderful opportunity, so we decided to sit up.

A machan was constructed and at about 6 p.m. we got into it. We expected the beast to come within the hours of 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., but it was not so. We sat motionless till about 9 p.m., after which I decided to have a sleep.

I was awakened by my dad at about half past one in the morning, with the good news that the tiger was prowling about. The moon was now shining bright above us.

Listening carefully I heard the beast coming towards us and not before long I saw him in a patch of moonlight which had penetrated through the tall trees. There he was, a monster, standing majestically and looking towards his kill ! But he was very suspicious and would not approach too close and kept on walking around the kill. He stopped again in a patch of moonlight and was looking up towards us, then suddenly made a quiet move and was beside his kill.

My dad's gun was to his shoulder and I took aim, but when lifting my gun he apparently saw me, as I was in rather a conspicuous place on the machan. Had he waited another second there might have been a different tale to tell. But it was his fate to live. He gave an angry roar and bounded heavily away.

We got off the machan and made an immediate start for home, at 2-30 a.m. The journey through the forest at that hour was enough to put our hair on end, as now and then some sort of an animal would make a noise, or an owlet would give a weird, sharp shriek. Taking our bikes from the village, we walked on till we arrived at the canal banks, from where we took an easy ride reaching home at 6-30 a.m. It was a bitterly cold morning. I dressed on arrival and was ready to leave for school by the 10 o'clock bus.

This was my first, but unlucky, chance to bag a tiger.

* * * *

Milwaukee Audubon Junior Club "Newsletter" of Fall, 1958

This newsletter lists the time and place for the field trips and the leaders training course. It contains a section on seasonal projects and activities for children, a book review section, a listing of the natural science resource bulletins that the committee has prepared especially for

these leaders on their own Milwaukee area, and general information about the programme of the Milwaukee Audubon Society. The opening paragraph of the Fall 1958, Newsletter illustrates so well the reason why this committee is making an all out effort to help the youth leaders in their community, that we quote it, as follows :

"Have you wondered where our future conservationists will come from ? Have you wondered who will carry on the fight to preserve our wetlands, our watersheds, and our wild life ? The children in your classes and in your youth groups will—if they somehow develop a genuine appreciation of nature. The alternative is to raise still another generation that treats our diminishing natural resources with indifference. Can we afford to ? This Newsletter is our first. In it we hope to help you achieve this goal of developing alert, responsible citizens who are fully cognizant of their responsibilities to our land and to the wild things that live on it."

* * * *

The Animal Prayer that Bore Fruit

It, no doubt, sounds fantastic that an animal should ever pray. But there is a story highly suggestive of such a phenomenon. The story is linked with the name of a dynamic historical figure, who in a brief, memorable career rose from being a trailing private to a mighty monarch.

One bright day, as the sun beat down hotly over the scrub forest of the great land of Persia, a young soldier astride a horse drifted into a remote wilderness in pursuit of animals. The trackless jungle was infested with thorny bushes like a grotesque net work—drab, rusty and tortuous.

It was soon past mid-day. A sudden breeze had raised the dust all round. In the haze, a pale sun peeped sickly from the zenith. The soldier's throat was parched. His fair face was riddled with innumerable beads of perspiration, like clustered pearls. His chestnut steed was feeling the heat, its sides wet and its nostrils dilating.

In spite of the difficulties, the journey had been uneventful and unrewarding. Not a bird nor a beast ! The going appeared to be a veritable wild goose chase so far. Just as the soldier was about to give in and retreat, his disappointment suddenly blossomed into hope. For, under the shade of a distant Acacia tree he beheld an antelope with her fawn. The sight helped to spur the flagging energies of the frustrated hunter, and he urged his horse after the quarry.

The horse galloped with the speed of the wind. But the deer and her fawn were no less swift. At the sight of the approaching horseman they dashed away in the distance, almost

like air-borne phantoms. The race was an exhibition of grace and skill. Leaving a cloud of dust behind, the galloping horse sped on, soon gaining distance over the fleeing victims.

Then suddenly the little fawn dropped to the ground through exhaustion, while the mother deer vanished behind a dense thicket. The soldier's eyes met the frightened gaze of the fallen baby-deer. Its pink nostrils bulged and the little heap, which was its tawny body, heaved rapidly. What a darling little pet it would make !

The tired sun hung low in the west as the soldier picked up the baby deer and turned away. He must make the journey home before nightfall, so he spurred and goaded on his faithful mount. On the way he caressed his little captive, whose soft warm ribs rose and fell nervously. He would soon try and bring it round. He would rear it well and the fawn would not take long to forget its mother. In course of time it would grow into a shapely, beautiful animal, with a majestic sweep of horns.

At last the dense forest faded into open country and the soldier headed for the city walls. Suddenly, in the soft turf at his rear he heard something approaching him. The soldier had had for some time an intuition that he was being followed. He threw a quick glance backwards and lo and behold to his great astonishment, the mother antelope was cantering gracefully not far behind his own horse, her ears pricked, timid yet determined.

A sudden lust for killing overpowered the soldier. He turned his horse and strung his bow. The deer stopped and wavered, then stood rivetted to the ground. Her courageous non-chalance baffled the soldier. He had anticipated to see the animal run for her life. But the animal instinct of self-preservation had yielded to maternal selflessness.

The stern hunter could bear the pathetic sight no longer. He lowered his bow and leaning down from the saddle he released the fawn. The baby deer wobbled on its feet and all too soon sank on its knees. There was an anxious pause. Then it rose and shakily trotted and then frisked towards its mother. The mother sniffed at the little one and soon discovered that all was well with it. Then the two darted away from the horseman, into the bosom of the sprawling wilderness far beyond. In a few seconds the soldier could see nothing beyond a thin trail of dust.

That night, under a full moon which sailed in a cloudless sky, the mother antelope sat in an open thicket mounting guard on her sleeping fawn. She still feared for its safety. Then she thanked the Almighty God and her heart poured blessings upon the kindly hunter. May he be a King some day.....A King !

That was Subutgin.

S. P. Sahi.

How our Wild Life is being Depleted.

WILD DOGS IN THE DARJEELING DISTRICT by C. M. SUR.

(Reprinted from The Indian Forester, July, 1957.)

[The most severe threat to game in certain parts of India is from the wild dog. Opinion, in Africa particularly, is divided as to whether this, most potent of nature's regulators, does not really serve a useful purpose. While there may be an argument for the wild dog in that continent, with its large concentrations of game animals, there can be none in India, where our wild life is down to the 'bottom of the bucket.'

Unfortunately, the authorities seem to be taking this threat to our game animals very lightly. The rewards offered for destruction of this pest are generally not attractive enough to have any effect on its numbers, while nowhere is any campaign being directed at its control. In the Mount Stewart area (Top-slip) of Madras wild dogs are plentiful and the reward is only Rs. 15/-. At the same time the area has been closed to shooting, so that not even the legitimate sportsman's occasional bag of a wild dog is available to keep down its numbers.

The descriptions given in the accompanying article are, in some cases (such as the reluctance of wild dogs to enter water) somewhat controversial, while the manner of killing has certainly not been recorded by other observers, so far as we are aware.

The article is reprinted to give the reader an idea of the ruthlessness of the wild dog and to focus attention on the need for greater efforts at its control, if not complete elimination, in India's forests.—Editor.]

In the Kalimpong Forest Division wild dogs are generally found in the reserved forests of Pambu, Guling, Churanthi, Fagu, Eastnar, Mo, Iche, Pankhasari and Lava blocks from 6,000 feet elevation down to the foot hills of the Himalayas between the Tista and Jaldhaka rivers. They were found in packs of 3 to 10 dogs at a time.

I am now giving an account of the killing of a sambar by a pack of 4 wild dogs in the Churanthi block in October, 1948. The dogs had chased a female sambar from the higher hills (3,000 feet), drove her through the various places of the hill forests up and down until she was thoroughly exhausted. She ran as quickly as her four legs could carry her and came down to the foot of the hills. Last of all she found a shelter in the bed of the Habong jhora just east of Chunabhati Forest Rest House where she lay down in the jhora bed with a view to hiding herself from the enemies—the wild dogs.

Unfortunately there was no water in the stream. Wild dogs have a strong sense of smell. They followed the track along which the wretched sambar ran for her life and

reached the place where she took shelter. Finding the sambar in the jhora bed they divided into two batches and attacked her simultaneously from front and back. One batch attacked her from the front and gouged out her eyes and the other batch attacked her from behind. One dog had pushed its front paw through the rectum of the deer and took out the intestine. The unfortunate sambar tried to run but could not as she had lost her eyes. She rolled down from side to side and cried bitterly for help but none came to her rescue till her last breath.

A Forest Guard, Pembu Lepcha, who was watching from the distance threw stones at the dogs and cried out. At this the wild dogs were startled, ran to a distance and started barking. In a few minutes they came back to the prey and started eating the carcass. The Forest Guard again cried out but they did not stop eating the flesh of the deer.

The Forest Guard then ran to the Range Office, reported the matter and returned with a gun and some men. He shot at the dogs with an S.G. cartridge. One dog fell down on the spot and died; others fled away. The length of this dog from the head to the root of the tail was 2 feet 10 inches and the tail was 14 inches long. The colour of the dog was reddish brown. A small portion surrounding the mouth was black. The teeth were like those of a village dog. The fur was somewhat longer than that of an ordinary village dog.

Here is another story about the hunting of a pig by wild dogs. One day in the month of June in 1948 the cries of a pig were heard from the Chunabhati Range Office near Bagrakote railway station. Two Forest Guards, Pembu Lapcha and Dhanbhadur Kami were sent to see what was happening. They found that nine wild dogs had attacked a pig in a dry stream bed. The eyes of the pig had been destroyed and the intestine had been removed through the rectum. The pig was still alive and was rolling right and left. It was understood that the pig was driven down from the hills and was over-powered by the wild dogs in the jhora bed.

The usual tactics of killing the prey was followed in this case too. The first item of attack is the destruction of the eyes and the second one is the removal of the intestines. The Forest Guards cried out, and the wild dogs hid themselves for a while and again came back to prey. By this time the Forest Guards got up on surrounding trees to see the fun and at the same time to save themselves from the attack of the wild dogs.

One by one the dogs started pawing out the inner part of the body of the pig through the rectum and abdomen. Their system of eating was noticed by the Forest Guards from the trees. One dog took out some flesh and started eating, then another dog came forward, thrust its front leg inside the belly, took out some flesh and started eating; thereafter another dog came in and did the same thing. The others sat round the pig which was still alive so that it could not run away and were waiting for their turn to take out the flesh.

The Forest Guards cried out again, and the dogs hid themselves in the bushes for a while and came back again to their favourite food which they had got after much trouble and toil. After a while the Forest Guards got down from the trees and came back to the office. They went back to the scene with a gun and fired at the dogs with No. 4 buckshot. One wild dog fell down on the spot, another was injured in the leg but fled away and others escaped safely. By this time half of the flesh of the pig was eaten up by the dogs.

The size of the dogs of this batch was smaller than that of the other wild dogs described before. The length of the carcass of the dog killed was 2 feet 6 inches; and this lot were much thinner than the other lot. These dogs had no black spots round their mouth. Their fur was longer than that of the local pie dogs.

In the Eastnar and Mo blocks, west of the Jaldhaka river, two varieties of wild dogs are found. One variety is smaller (about 1½ feet high). The mouth of the big sized dogs is blackish and the tail has a big tuft of fur like the tail of Bhutia dogs. The dogs are neither black nor red but somewhat grey coloured.

The smaller-sized dogs are found in the Mo block of Jaldhaka range. The colour of the dogs is like that of foxes. Five small dogs were found in one pack. They fled away to a distance at the sight of men.

Here is an account of the hunting excursion of a pack of wild dogs in the Chilauni block near the Neora river. One winter afternoon in 1945 two cows of Chilauni Tea Estate were grazing in the reserved forest about two furlongs away from the tea garden boundary. A pack of 7 wild dogs surrounded the cows. One dog jumped on the back of one cow, held the base of the tail firmly with its left front paw, thrust its right front leg into the rectum and held the two side ribs firmly with the two hind legs keeping its face towards the back of the cow. Another dog was biting the hind legs.

Five dogs were in front. They gouged out the eyes of the cow. The cow ran for her life for a distance of about 400 feet and then fell down. The dog on the back did not fall down but managed to hold on while the cow ran; it was busy removing the intestine of the cow through the rectum. It dropped down only when the cow fell down. At that time all other wild dogs started taking out flesh from different parts of the cow by biting and went on eating the same joyfully. The other cow fled away when her companion had fallen a victim to the wild dogs and saved her life. Narbahadur Chettri, Forest Guard, witnessed this incident at the time of returning to his quarters.

Here is an instance of the activity of wild dogs in the reserved forests west of the Tista river. Once one sambar stag was chased by some wild dogs in the reserved forest of Kurseong

Sub-Division near Riyang railway station on the west bank of the Tista river. The sambar ran for his life up and down as quickly as he could, but his enemies did not give up their chase. He tried in various ways to get rid of his hunters but was not successful. Last of all he came to the bank of the Riyang river and dipped his body into the water keeping only his head above the water level, a few feet away from the edge of the water. This last device saved his life from his enemies, the wild dogs.

The dogs followed the track along which the deer ran and came to the bank of the stream. They were astonished to find the deer immersed in water but they did not dare attack the deer in the water for fear of being drowned. They waited nearby for some time and then went away. The deer finding his enemies dispersed came out of the water and entered into the forest. There were some spectators of the scene who could not but praise the deer for his wit. Some people of Riyang bazar wanted to hit the deer with stones but the Shooting Guard, who was also a spectator of the fun, did not allow anybody to injure the deer.

"Who's Who In Wild Life Preservation"

Col. R. W. Burton, Indian Army (Retd.)

Col. R. W. Burton comes of an old army family famous in India not only for military achievements but for shikar and wild life observation. Although of an older generation to most of the sportsmen alive to-day in India, Col. Burton became known in the recent post-war years for his particularly active association with wild life conservation in India. It was he, more than anybody else, who after the war was responsible for the 'renaissance' in the wild life activities and interest which resulted in the formation of the Central (later Indian) Board of Wild Life.

In 1948 he contributed an article to the Bombay Natural History Society on "Wild Life Preservation, India's Vanishing Asset". This was published in pamphlet form and sent to all governments and high government officials. He followed this up with a supplement and a pamphlet, which was cyclostyled and widely made known in 1949. In 1950 he submitted a memorandum to the Under Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Scientific Research, New Delhi, for use by the committee set up for examination of ways and means for creating national parks and sanctuaries in India. The committee met in Delhi in 1951 and as a result of its report, the Government of India decided on the formation of the Central Wild Life Board.

When the board was inaugurated at Mysore in December 1952, Col. Burton was an honoured guest on the final day of the meeting and this must have been a source of great

satisfaction to him. It must be stated, however, that Col. Burton was of the view that wild life management should be taken out of the hands of the forest department and placed in the charge of special game departments, whereas it was decided otherwise at Mysore and the previous system was continued. Was he right and was the decision of those assembled at Mysore wrong ? Only the future will tell !

Col. Burton came out to India as a young commissioned officer in 1890 and retired in 1923 after serving all over—India and Burma. Comparatively early in his career, as the result of riding and other accidents, he was compelled to enter civil employment. It was said that some of the scars he bore were the result of his encounters with wild animals.

Col. Burton joined the Bombay Natural History Society in 1893 and though he is now in his 90th year he still contributes articles and miscellaneous notes to that Society's journal. In all, his contributions on wild life total over 200.

Before he left India, he completed a most valuable compilation, with the financial backing of the Maharaja of Mysore, entitled "The Preservation of Wild Life in India", with a summarised index of contents, of which 500 copies were printed. This is a most valuable work of reference for anybody interested in preservation of India's wild life. When he was leaving India in April 1953, he addressed the members of the Bombay Natural History Society and an appreciation of his work as a member of the Society for 60 years is to be found in Vol. 51 at page 763.

Col. Burton is a most meticulous note-taker and indexer of information on wild life and he took with him on his retirement to England a number of note-books, which contain references to items of wild life interest in the past journals of the Bombay Natural History Society, from which he is able at any time to refer to previous articles on a particular subject.

If Col. Burton is convinced of one thing more than anything else, it is of the great menace of the motor vehicle to wild life in India. He maintains that unless severe penalties are enforced for the use, or rather mis-use, of motor vehicles for killing wild animals, no improvement in the situation will result.

To-day Col. Burton, though at an age when most people have ceased to interest themselves in 'movements', is still intensely interested in the problem of wild life preservation in India. The photograph of him shows two young jungle crows which were blown from a tall tree in a storm and which he rescued.

All those interested in wild life will wish him good luck in reaching his 'century' and success and happiness in his continuing efforts for wild life preservation in India.

P.D.S.

Lt. Col. R. W. Burton.

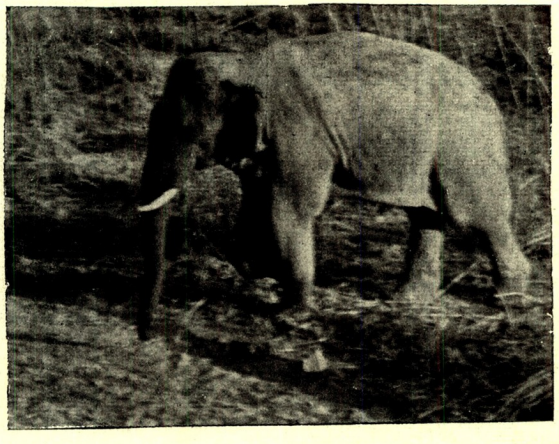
This photograph was taken in July 1957. The two young carrion crows were blown with nest from top of a tall tree in a storm and saved by self and a lady from earliest days. We see them around where they were reared to live among their relatives.

—*B. Mitchell.*

Sansis or Kanjars with a Mixed Bag.

—*P. D. Stracey.*

A Tusker in Musth



—*B. Mitchell.*

Elephant from Machan.

Reflections

[The suggestion made here is a most valuable one, as of the two—a grazing area and a crop belt adjoining forests—the former is more helpful to wild life. 'Buffer belts' around sanctuaries have been suggested to States by the Indian Board of Wild Life, the intention being that there should be no shooting in such buffer belts, but if this is strictly implemented it will seriously curtail the shooting facilities for sportsmen. Some of the best shooting is, naturally, to be found in the blocks adjoining sanctuaries.

What is wanted is to prevent cultivation from going right up to the boundary of a reserved forest and if a strip of forest is left for grazing it would be very helpful to wild life. If cattle co-operatives are encouraged in such 'buffer-belts', so much the better. In all cases, however, preventitive inoculation against cattle-borne diseases of such cattle grazing on the edges of forests, whether mere reserved forests or sanctuaries, must be regularly and systematically done.—Editor.]

* * * *

Recently duty took me along the forest road from Hardwar to Ramnagar. The road is in good condition and the drive a pleasure to the lover of jungles. There was very little game seen along the road, except a few pea-fowls, barking deer and cheetals.

In two places I saw large clearings. They have been fenced and in one of them a tractor was working. It made me wonder whether most of the *tarai* jungles were being cleared right up to the south edge of the jungle road, to be put under the plough. If so, it will be a sad day for wild life. It is not uncommon to learn that each of the farms adjoining the *tarai* have already accounted for several hundred heads of deer. The game is fast decreasing in these areas due to encroachment of mankind.

Moreover, I much regret to remark that, in spite of the forest barriers, jeep loads of people go into the jungles with spotlights and armed with LG/SD shots. One party, who offered a lift to a friend of mine, claimed 8 butcheries in one night. It has even been divulged to a reliable source that the permission is obtained from and at times the parties are accompanied by, forest officials. It would be a worthwhile service if the Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India can put an end to this wanton slaughter which occurs not without the knowledge of certain forest officials.

The above facts and the clearings made me reflect, while driving along this beautiful jungle road, as to how wild life may be preserved. The thought stuck me that some protective barrier between the jungles and the farms is essential, if wild life is to be protected. I had noticed healthy cattle grazing near Lalkua. This gave me an idea that if cattle co-operatives, controlled by the game warden of the forest department, could be established

along the southern edge of the reserved forests, they could act as a buffer between the forests and farms and help to preserve wild life.

At present the reserved forests adjoin farms in many places. The deer and antelope tend to raid crops in certain seasons. This results in their wholesale destruction. If cattle cooperatives are established, a belt of open jungles would exist between the reserved forest and the farms. The open nature of the jungle, the presence of cattle and human-beings, and the distance separating the crops and the wild life habitat would tend to reduce deer-raiding. This would not only protect the fast diminishing wild life, but could also produce much needed milk from an area which, judged by the condition of the cattle I saw in Lalkua, should be excellent grazing grounds.

This is an idea which the Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India may wish to examine in greater detail, in consultation with the game wardens and the forest department. If as a result, an extensive buffer belt can be created all along the U.P. *tarai*, the Society would be achieving its aim of protecting wild life through means which would be doubly useful to the country.

Lt. General Bahadur Singh.

The First General Body Meeting, 19th April, 1959

The first General Body Meeting of the Wild Life Preservation Society of Northern India was held on the 19th April, 1959 at Dehra Dun, a little over a year after the Society was formed (on the 13th April, 1958). The gathering was fairly well attended. Several non-members were present by invitation. The Maharaja of Nabha, the President of the Society, was in the chair.

Before the meeting commenced tea was served, the main item of which was a huge cake presented by the President to mark the first birthday of the Society, and which was much appreciated. The society's flag (a cheetal head on a green background) was flown and a group photograph was taken. The agenda of the meeting is reproduced here, as well as the speeches of the President and the Hony. Secretary and the auditor's report with statement of accounts.

The revised constitution of the society was considered and it was decided to have it vetted by a small sub-committee, with a view to later registering the society under the Society's Registration Act. A feature of the revised constitution is the addition of Educational (teachers) and Professional (forestry and soil conservation, agriculture etc.) members at *half*

the Ordinary membership rates, and of Family members at *double* the rates; the provision for commutation of membership for life by payment of 10 years subscription, and for conversion of these categories of members to Life Membership within 5 years on payment of the difference.

Four sub-committees, for Legislation, Fishing, Publicity and Propaganda and Education were formed, as follows :—

(1) **Legislation.**

1. Shri P. D. Stracey, I.F.S., (Chairman and Convenor).
2. ,, K. S. Srivastava, Advocate, 11, Circular Road, Dehra Dun.
3. ,, B. Mitchell, Arcadia Tea Estate, Dehra Dun.
4. ,, S. S. Negi, C.F. (Rtd), Karanpur, Dehra Dun.
5. ,, J. N. Onial, Honorary Secretary.
6. ,, T. S. Negi, I.P. (Rtd), Rajpur Road, Dehra Dun.
7. D.F.O., Dehra Dun Divn. (ex-officio).

(2) **Fishing.**

1. Sardar Gurkirat Singh Mann, Chander Road, Dehra Dun, (Chairman and Convenor)
2. Military College, Premnagar, Dehra Dun.
3. Shri O. D. Jackson, Survey of India, (Rtd), 6, Curzon Road, Dehra Dun.
4. Major Mainwaring, Cambrian Hall, Dehra Dun.
5. Shri R. L. Holdsworth, The Doon School, Dehra Dun.
6. ,, M. A. Edwards, Edwards Building, Dehra Dun.
7. D.F.O. Saharanpur Divn. (ex-officio).

(3) **Publicity.**

1. Shri R. L. Holdsworth, The Doon School, (Chairman and Convenor).
2. ,, P.D. Stracey, I.F.S., Dehra Dun.
3. Brig. Gambhir Singh, Surveyor General of India, Dehra Dun.
4. Shri S. P. Sahi, F.R.I., Dehra Dun.
5. ,, J. N. Onial, Honorary Secretary.
6. ,, Bhagwan Das Khorana, Assistant Honorary Secretary.
7. ,, H. K. Dang, The Doon School, Dehra Dun.

(4) **Propaganda and Education.**

1. Shri S. P. Sahi, F.R.I., Dehra Dun, (Chairman and Convenor).
2. Representative of F.R.I. Wild Club, Dehra Dun.
3. Shri Narendra Singh, Colonel Brown School, Dehra Dun.
4. ,, M.A. Rashid, F.R.I., Dehra Dun.
5. Dr. R. S. Gupta, Soil Conservationist (Rtd), Chakrata Road, Dehra Dun.
6. Shri V. K. Sharma, F.R.I., Dehra Dun.

The second issue of the "Cheetal" magazine made its appearance at the meeting and was distributed to members, as also the Society's tie (dark green with small cheetal head on it), the society's buttons and member's cards. Absent members were invited to apply to the Honorary Secretary for these.

The meeting was a great success and came to a conclusion with a vote of thanks to the chair.

The advice tendered by Chief Justice Manchanda (Retd.) of the Punjab High Court on the question of the constitution was much appreciated and he was thanked for having taken the trouble of coming to the meeting, as also Mr. Hamid Ali, I.C.S. (Retd.) brother of Mr. Salim Ali, the famous ornithologist.

Speech of H H. of Nabha, the President of the Society.

In welcoming the members present, the President explained that it was not possible to send the audited report of the accounts and the Secretary's report to the members before the meeting and asked to be excused. The President then went on : "Details of the work done during the year is contained in the Secretary's report, so I will confine myself to general remarks.

The society, on the whole, deserves to be congratulated on the progress made. There appears to be genuine interest in the problem of saving wild life in the country, to judge from the response from the public during the short time of one year and we expect further progress in the year to come in enrolling members, increasing the funds and expanding the work of the society. It is also expected, now the teething stage of the society is over, that attention can be focused on publicity and propaganda work, which is the main plank of the society. With greater support behind it the society can press Governments to improve their rules and their enforcement machinery.

In these respects, the progress so far has been admittedly rather slow, even allowing for the proverbial slowness in such matters. The proposals made by the society have covered a wide range of action to protect wild life and while they have been welcomed in most quarters there is no sign yet of their being implemented on a wide scale. Forest officers, who are the primary guardians of wild life in the country, have a great responsibility in this connection and I would respectfully urge heads of the forest departments to exert the maximum pressure on their Governments in the interest of wild life.

The question whether our society should enlarge its jurisdiction at this early stage is to be seriously considered and we hope that the members present will express some opinion on this. Our constitution provides for the formation of branches, but so far no branches have been opened. This is essential, for broad-basing our activities. In this connection, there is a

certain amount of confusion in the minds of a lot of people as to the difference between the scope and functions of a society such as ours and more scientific organisations (like the Zoological Survey of India and the Bombay Natural History Society) and Wild Life Boards. Our society is pledged to work directly for wild life and we do not propose to encroach on the field of scientific work of a research or taxonomic nature. As regards Wild Life Boards, they are purely *advisory* bodies and are strictly limited in strength to the few members nominated by the Government. A society, on the other hand, can embrace a considerable section of the public and to that extent its voice is much more representative. Such an organisation of private individuals is free, moreover, to express its opinion frankly and embracing as it does many experienced shikaries and knowledgeable persons in wild life, it can put forward proposals with complete confidence that they are the best possible under the circumstances. When I say this, I do not wish to decry the great authority wielded by such boards, which are composed of important and knowledgeable persons. I merely wish to point out that the functions of a wild life board and a society like ours are not entirely similar and on the contrary, are complementary to each other. Moreover, a private society like ours has greater scope in publicity, propaganda and educative work for wild life, even in these days of Governmental activities in such matters, subject of course to the availability of funds.

We are anxious to broaden our organisation and take it down to the level of the student and the rural dweller, for it is in the hands of the youth of our nation and of the agricultural and rural dwellers, who live with animals and birds outside their doors as it were, that the future of our wild life heritage lies. For this we require to prepare projection material, such as slides and cine films, based on Indian examples and showing Indian settings. We also require enthusiastic people who will utilise such projection material in rural areas and among students. We shall have to, in this connection, seriously consider the employment of whole time workers who will act for us as 'inspectors' of wild life and who will carry out the necessary propaganda and publicity for us in rural areas and in educational institutions. In this respect, I am sure, many of our members can help in the course of their wanderings on shikar. The education of the young by lectures and talks is a task which is particularly suited to most of our members.

The task that we have set ourselves is no easy or small one. Persons have asked; "What do we get out of the society? What do I get for the money that I pay? What is being done for our members?" I am afraid we can offer very little in return to our members except the journal, which, I think you will all agree with me, has been a great success and the knowledge and feeling that they are working to save wild life for posterity.

I am sure you will all join with me in wishing the society a long life and continued success.

I will now ask the Secretary to read his report."

प्रकृति की गुहार

(Voice of Nature)

राजेन्द्रसिंह

ओ, सभ्य मनुष्यों,
अहेरों के प्रेमी
प्रकृति की गुहारें
सुनो ध्यान देकर।

ये चीतल, ये सांभर,
ये चंचल हिरनें'
'किसी' के कला के
हैं अद्भुत नमूने।

राष्ट्र के प्रतीक
सबल केशरी को
देश के लिये तो
इन्हें तुम बचाओ।

ये शेर चीते,
प्रकृति के खिलौने
इन्हें तुम न तोड़ो
हैं देश के नगीने।

रीछों की आंखें
रो रो के कह रही हैं;
मुझे तुम न छेड़ो
हे देश के सपूतों।

ये तोता, ये मैना
ये बुलबुल चमन के
समझो रईसों ! ये
क्या कह रहे हैं ?

वह गायों की पाँती,
वह हाथी का जोड़ा,
भगे जा रहे हैं,
भगे जा रहे हैं।

वह हंसों की अवली,
वह चकवे की जोंड़ी,
अरे सभ्य मनुष्यों !
कहां तुम गवांये ?

अमर राइनों के,
रक्त में नहाये,
क्या यही सभ्यता थी,
जिसे तुम सजाये ?

तोते से पंछी को,
हाथी से हस्ती को,
पिंजरे में अपने
तुम बन्दी बनाये।

रीछों से जीवों को,
मर्कट निरीहों को,
अपनी सभ्यता के
तुम द्वार पर नचाये।

सूकर की मांसों पर,
हिरणों की खालों पर,
अरे क्रूर मानव, तुम,
बहुत कुछ गवांये।

फिर भी अभी तक
रहे तुम अचेते,
निरीहों को मारे
चले जा रहे हो।

ये जीव सारे,
रूठे हैं तुमसे,
तुम्हें छोड़ कर
ये स्वयं जा रहे हैं।

अगर सभ्य हो तो,
इन्हें तुम बुलाओ
अगर शक्ति हो तो
इन्हें तुम बचाओ।

सुनो कान देकर
प्रकृति कह रही है
बहुत जुल्म ढाये
अब न ढहाओ।

गौतम की बोली में,
गांधी की वाणी में,
अहिंसा, अहिंसा की
ध्वनि आ रही है।

जीवों की रक्षा
करो ऐ मनुष्यों
नहीं तो तुम्हें
नष्ट होना पड़ेगा

देश के लिये नहीं,
तो स्वयं के लिये,
इन्हें तुम बचाओ,
इन्हें तुम बचाओ।

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90. Mr. James A. Sutherland, Dy. News Editor, The Statesman, 68, Kaka Nagar, New Delhi.
91. Mr. Reginald Sawhny, 6 Jorbagh Nursery, New Delhi-3.
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93. Mr. W. S. Merriman, National Pipes and Tubes Co., Shamnagar, 24 Parganas (E. Rly).
94. Mr. I. R. Greenwood, P.O. Box No. 1, Chilanga, Northern Rhodesia..
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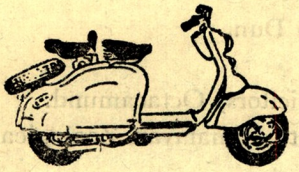

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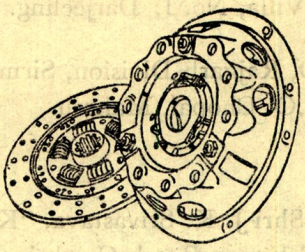

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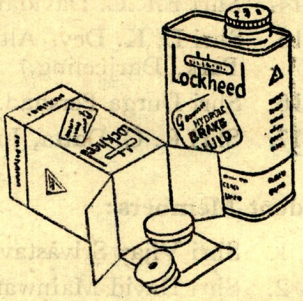

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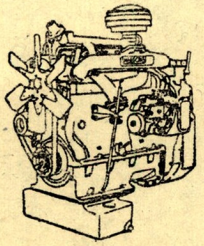

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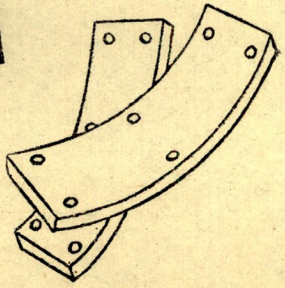

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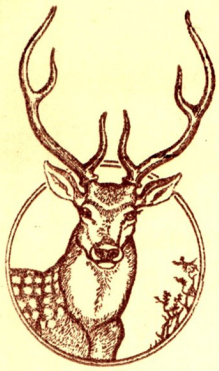

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Vol. 2 OCTOBER, 1959 No. 1

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